

# THE TIMES

35P

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## FASHION FAIRYTALE

Grace Bradberry on John Galiano's conquest of Paris

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## HOW TO BUY IN A BOOM

16-PAGE SPECIAL



Weeping ex-hostess friend taken to hospital

## Merchant resigns 'to protect family'

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

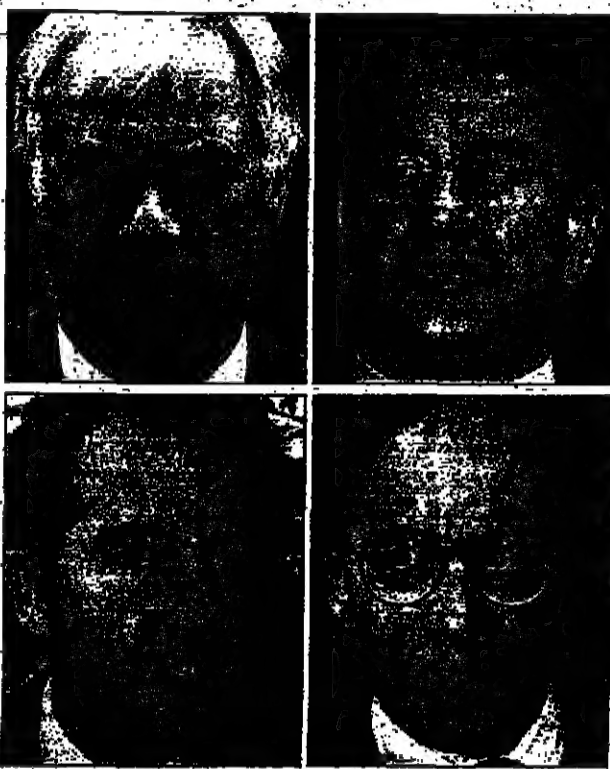
SLEAZE returned to haunt the Conservatives yesterday when the MP Piers Merchant quit over renewed allegations about his relationship with a teenage nightclub hostess — less than a week after William Hague said that sexual impropriety was no cause for resignation.

The 46-year-old Beckenham MP has repeatedly denied any sexual relationship with Anna Cox, 18, but he said that he had decided to go "to shield his family and friends from intense and continued intrusion into our private lives".

His decision will prompt a by-election in one of the safer Tory seats, opening the way for the long line of former MPs seeking to make a comeback. There was immediate speculation that Michael, Lord Patten, Sir Malcolm Rifkind and William Waldegrave might be tempted, although friends of Mr Portillo — who made a striking appearance at the party conference last week — said that it might be "too soon".

Allegations about Mr Merchant and Miss Cox — a former Soho hostess who became a researcher — first surfaced early in the general election campaign, bringing a broad hint from Michael Heseltine that the MP should stand down as a candidate. Nevertheless, Beckenham Conservatives stood by him and he went on to retain the seat with a majority of 4,953 majority in spite of a 15 per cent swing to Labour.

But on Sunday, the *Sunday Mirror* ran six pages of allegations about the MP and Miss Cox, including claims that they spent several nights together at the Blackpool conference last week. Both again



Patten, Portillo, Waldegrave and Rifkind head the list of possible contenders to fight a by-election

denied any improper behaviour — they said that they were working on a book about the tabloid press — and after the conference Mr Merchant took Miss Cox back to his home where she was seemingly welcomed by his wife, Helen.

Yesterday, however, he telephoned the Tory deputy chief whip Peter Ainsworth to say that he could no longer endure the attention of the tabloids and so he had decided to go.

Mr Merchant said later that the decision was "entirely his own" and that he had been put under no pressure to quit. Mr Hague's aides and Conserva-

tive Central Office took a similar line, but it is known that Central Office had been trying to get at the truth over the allegations and Tory sources said that there had been no attempt to dissuade him. It was also clear that Beckenham Tories were turning against him.

Apart from issuing a statement about the decision, both Mr Merchant and his wife remained hidden in their Beckenham home yesterday. But Miss Cox appeared, first to berate camera crews outside, and later to be taken to Bromley Hospital by ambulance after an apparent fit of hysteria. She had shouted at waiting journalists: "What do you want? You are not going to get a picture, so why don't you all just go to hell. You are trying to break up families and you're not going to get away with it."

Rising to a shrill shriek, she continued: "I have had enough of you," before striking out at a reporter, bursting into tears and running into the house.

Minutes later, police arrived escorting an ambulance and Miss Cox, her head in her hands, staggered on the arm of a paramedic shouting: "Oh God, I can't take any more."

In his statement, Mr Merchant, a former journalist, said: "The decision is taken to protect my family, especially my two sensitive children, and also my friends, including Anna Cox and her family, from the intensive and continued intrusion into our private lives, which otherwise seems set to continue indefinitely, and from further character assassination."

But the *Sunday Mirror*, which welcomed the MP's resignation, suggested last night that further revelations would follow if he continued to accuse journalists of fabrication. The Editor, Bridget Rowe, said that she had "100 per cent, incontrovertible proof" that Mr Merchant and Miss Cox were enjoying a full sexual relationship.

And in a statement, the newspaper said: "In his statement of resignation, Mr Merchant talks of 'character assassination' by the tabloid press and complains of 'intensive and continued intrusion' into his private life. It was the web of deceit and lies spun by him that trapped him and

attracted the necessary and quite proper attention of the British press."

In Beckenham, the Conservative Association deputy chairman Rod Reed said that he was sorry to hear of the resignation, although he believed that Mr Merchant had made the right decision. "The reaction here is really one of sadness, bearing in mind that he was a very good local constituency MP."

But Bert Miles, a local councillor and a member of the association for 20 years, suggested that the party

would have dropped Mr Merchant anyway in the wake of the latest allegations. "I don't think he would have got away with it twice," he said. "I looked at the pictures of him in the papers at the weekend when he was supposed to be at the conference. I think he has let everybody down. The association might well have tried to sack him if he hadn't resigned. The leaders of the association are probably breathing a sigh of relief."

Betraying trust, page 13  
Leading article, page 21



Anna Cox confronting journalists outside the Merchants' home yesterday



Merchant complained of tabloid intrusion

## Booker Prize goes to debut novelist

By Erica Wagner

DEBUT novelist Arundhati Roy has won the 1997 Booker Prize. Roy, 37 and from India, had been the favourite to take this year's £20,000 award.

Professor Gillian Beer, who chaired the judges, said: "The extraordinary linguistic inventiveness of Arundhati Roy funnels the history of south India through the eyes of seven-year-old twins."

"The story she tells is fundamental as well as local: it is about love and death, about lies and laws. Her narrative crackles with riddles and yet tells its tale quite clearly. We were all engrossed by this moving novel."

Roy's triumph night only serves to confirm her place as this year's literary sensation. *The God of Small Things* is her first novel — but literary agent David Godwin flew to India to meet her within four days of receiving the manuscript.

The book has now been sold in more than 30 countries and has earned over £1m in advanced rights sales. It has caused uproar in India depicting as it does an affair between a low-caste Paravian man and a Christian woman.

Roy was born in Kerala, part of a community of Syrian Christians — but also outside that community as her mother had divorced her father, a Bengali Hindu. She trained as an architect before becoming a screenwriter, collaborating with her husband on a film, *Electric Moon*, commissioned by Channel 4 in 1992.

The couple live in Delhi, where Roy now contemplates her future. After the publication of *The God of Small Things* she hinted that she might not write another novel.

The novel's structure is complex. Devising this, Roy has said, is what occupied most of the four-and-a-half years that it took to write.

## Gas bills could fall by £34 a year

Domestic gas bills could fall by up to £34 a year after Ofgas, the industry regulator, ordered BG, the former British Gas, to reduce the tariffs it charges for transporting gas through its pipeline.

The ruling ended a two-year dispute between the gas regulator and BG. Page 27

## Royal tribute

The Queen stoned on behalf of Britain yesterday for the 1919 Amritsar massacre with flowers, a minute's silence and a bow in homage to the 379 peaceful demonstrators who died. Page 5

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## Harrods chief ordered staff to break into Rowland's deposit box, says Hamilton

By Andrew Pierce, Political Correspondent

MOHAMED AL FAYED was accused yesterday of ordering his staff to break open a safe deposit box at his Harrods store in London. The box was owned by his bitter business rival Tiny Rowland.

The claim was made by Neil Hamilton, former Conservative MP for Tatton, during a two-hour appearance before the Commons Standards and Privileges Committee on the cash-for-questions affair.

Mr Hamilton produced a statement from Bob Lofus, a former director of security at Harrods, who claimed that Mr Al Fayed had ordered his employees, including a former Scotland Yard detective chief superintendent, to sift through the safe deposit box wearing plastic gloves from the store's food hall.

Scotland Yard confirmed last night that it was investigating the allegations but that no arrests had been made. The

accusation was denied by Harrods: the store described Mr Lofus as a disgruntled former employee who had made false claims about the store's management.

Mr Rowland confirmed that he had a safe deposit box at the headquarters of his old adversary. "The matter is in the hands of the police. I have gone with senior officers from Scotland Yard to retrieve what was left in my box," he said.

The statement from Mr Lofus, who was head of Harrods security from 1987 until last year, was read to the hearing only after urgent consultations between Mr Hamilton, who lost his seat over the cash-for-questions affair, and his legal adviser. It was handed to Mr Hamilton's legal team some days earlier by Mr Rowland, the former Lorrho chief, who in the 1980s lost to Mr Al Fayed a bitter battle to buy Harrods.

The statement formed a crucial part of Mr Hamilton's evidence to the committee in his effort to clear his name of the cash-for-questions claims.

Reading from Mr Lofus's statement, Mr Hamilton said that on December 6, 1995, Mr Al Fayed, chairman of Harrods, became agitated when he discovered the identity of one of the holders of a deposit box in the Harrods bank. The businessman "berated" Mr Lofus for not telling him before because he wanted to know what was in the box, Mr Hamilton said. The individual was Mr Rowland.

Mr Hamilton, who lost his seat to Martin Bell, the BBC foreign correspondent, was responding to the report by Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner, which concluded that there was compelling evidence he took up to £25,000 from Mr Al Fayed. The payments were

alleged to have been made in brown envelopes stuffed with £50 notes. He denied the charge repeatedly yesterday.

He read from the statement in which Mr Lofus claimed that Mr Al Fayed had told him to get full details of Mr Rowland's account. Later that month John McNamara, the present director of security of Harrods Holdings, visited Mr Lofus's office and indicated that Mr Al Fayed wanted access to the safe deposit box with the aid of a discreet locksmith.

When Mr Lofus protested this could not be done, Mr McNamara said twice: "If the chairman [Mr Al Fayed] wants it done, we do it."

Members of the all-party committee laughed when Mr Hamilton described the locksmith as "the unfortunately named Roy Hamilton — no relation".

Later, a spokesman for Mr

Al Fayed said in a statement: "Mr Lofus is a disgruntled former employee of Harrods. Following his dismissal, he demanded substantial sums of money in advance of an industrial tribunal. He failed to obtain the sums of money he demanded, but the case was settled. Subsequently, Mr Lofus made a number of false allegations against the management of Harrods, one of which was referred to by Mr Hamilton."

Neil Hamilton rejected the dismissal of Mr Lofus as a "disgruntled employee" and said that the store's former security chief would stand by the claims made at the committee hearing. "I know that Mr Lofus is prepared to stand it all up," he added, "and, as he is effectively incriminating himself, that is a powerful argument."

MP's hearing, page 12

## Jury acquits police marksman of murder

By Stewart Tindler, Crime Correspondent

A SCOTLAND YARD marksman was cleared at the Old Bailey yesterday of killing a robbery suspect who tried to drive away in a stolen car.

PC Patrick Hodgson, 50, was the first police officer in modern times accused of committing murder in the course of his duties. He stood trial three times for shooting David Ewin, 38, a former robber, before a jury acquitted him after taking less than two hours to reach a verdict. PC

Hodgson looked at the ceiling and then nodded his thanks to the jury. Friends said he had been shattered by the case. He had never fired his gun in anger and was only on patrol on the day of the shooting because of staff shortages.

PC Hodgson first stood trial last December but the case was aborted. In April a second jury could not agree. Although the criminal case is over, he still faces an inquest and a civil action by Mr Ewin's family.

The shooting took place in February 1995 when PC Hodg-

son, a firearms officer for more than 15 years, was part of the crew of an armed response vehicle which spotted a stolen Toyota sports car parked outside an off-licence in Barnes, South London. Mr Ewin was one of two men seen leaving the shop. During a confrontation, Mr Ewin shunted the car backwards and forwards in a bid to escape and nearly crushed the officer. PC Hodgson fired his 9mm Glock handgun twice at Mr Ewin, who died in hospital.

During the trials the police-

man said he fired because he believed his life and those of bystanders had been in danger. Mr Ewin had refused to stop and was driving the car "like a maniac".

Mr Ewin had 40 convictions. At the time of the shooting he was living in a prison hostel after being jailed for armed robbery. Blood tests showed he was over the alcohol limit for driving.

Last night PC Hodgson was suspended from further duties while the Yard and the Police Complaints Authority considered his future.



Hodgson: believed his life was in danger

## In Esquire this month:

"Bob's favourite Spice Girl is Dinner Lady Spice"  
**Vic Reeves Esq.**

"William Burroughs loved guns and hated women; I am somewhat the other way round"  
**Will Self Esq.**

"About 14 bottles of Jack Daniels got done that day — not all of them by me and Liam"  
**Paul "Guiguy" McGuigan Esq.**

"You have to pay to be a Friend of Harry Enfield like a Friend of the National Opera"  
**Paul Whitehouse Esq.**



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# Cash boost 'will prevent winter crisis in NHS'

By Philip Webster, Political Editor, and Ian Murray

TONY BLAIR predicted yesterday that the health service would avoid a winter crisis after Gordon Brown announced an emergency £300 million for patient care.

Despite claims that the NHS would still be £50 million worse off than under Conservative plans because of increased inflation, Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, said the money would both help with imminent difficulties and improve practice in the long-term by providing better community services.

The announcement coincided with Mr Blair's visit to London's Central Middlesex Hospital, which has made more beds available by moving elderly people to their own homes, where they recover with the help of social services staff.

Mr Dobson said that he wanted to start breaking down the "Berlin wall" between the health service and social service departments. The money will go to health authorities but they will transfer it to social services where appropriate.

Mr Blair said the Government had kept a promise by

CUTBACKS in defence spending to bolster the NHS budget had already been drawn up by MoD officials (Michael Evans, defence correspondent, writes). After the Chancellor's order to pay back last year's £168 million overspending, a senior MoD official admitted that the cuts in "non-operational areas" had meant ministers taking "painful but manageable" decisions.

providing the money and it was up to those running the NHS to improve it. No amount would ever be enough, but he believed the cash announced would avert a winter crisis.

The money-finding exercise, begun by Mr Dobson, Mr Brown and Mr Blair shortly after the election, has worried other ministers. The Chancellor raided other Whitehall budgets — notably Defence, and Trade and Industry — to secure the money that was needed to avert ward closures.

Some £168 million came from the Ministry of Defence

in the form of a "fine" for overspending by that amount last year. Treasury sources gave a warning that other departments exceeding the targets of the Conservative Government for this and next year would be similarly treated.

The money is on top of the extra £1.2 billion announced in the Budget for the NHS for next year's spending. Some £100 million came from Margaret Beckett's Trade and Industry budget out of savings on nuclear decommissioning, and £30 million from administrative savings agreed with the NHS.

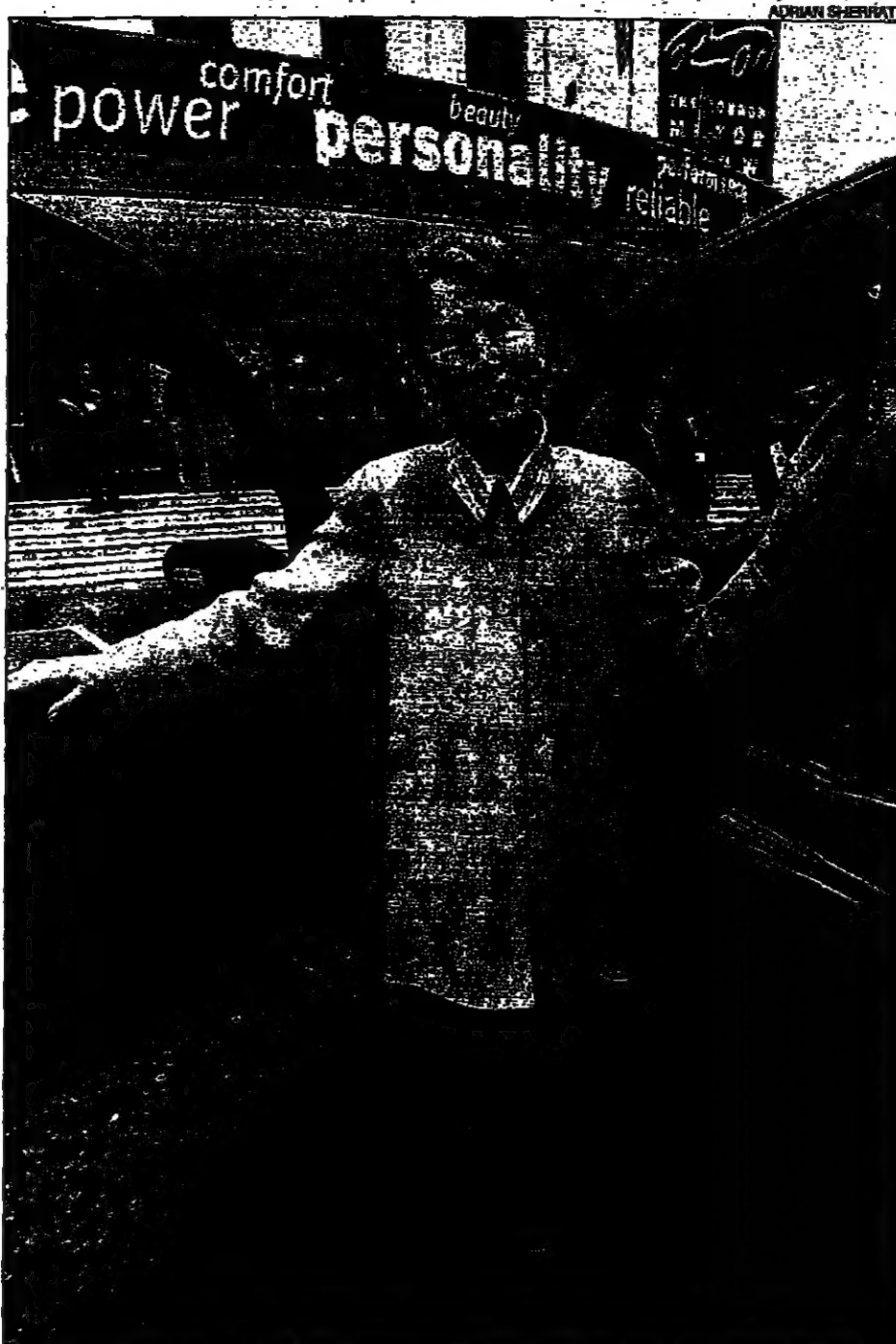
The Chancellor justified taking money from the MoD budget, saying there was overspending on the ministry's budget under the last Government. "And it's right that we deal with every department in that way. Where there is overspending there has got to be this money taken back," he told BBC Radio 4's Today.

Mr Dobson said the money would help hospitals to keep services running seven rather than five days a week, stop beds from being closed and increase staffing. "The money will also be used to work on rehabilitation in hospitals, and the Central Middlesex is a brilliant example of what is needed."

The money would be used to develop pioneering new approaches "which will bring lasting benefits and help to break down the 'Berlin wall' between health and social services."

□ The Institute for Fiscal Studies, the economics research group, said that the plan will provide real extra money without breaking the Government's tough spending totals (Alasdair Murray writes).

But the IFS described some of the measures the Treasury has taken "as a bit of wheeze". In particular, the £102 million to be redirected from Trade and Industry can be viewed as a painless paper transfer of funds. This money was provided in the DTI's budget as a "provision" to cover potential losses at the state-owned British Nuclear Fuels that did not materialise.



Glenda Jackson: "This Government is not anti-car just anti over-dependence"

## Car-makers criticise huge traffic forecasts

By Arthur Leathley and Kevin Eason

MINISTERS were embroiled in a public battle with car makers yesterday over government forecasts of a huge increase in road traffic and their pledge to curb unnecessary car use.

The motor industry reacted angrily to the prediction of a 38 per cent increase over the next 20 years, which coincided with the opening of the London Motor Show, where 60 new models were on display.

Gavin Strang, the Transport Minister, made clear that action will be taken by the Government to slow the

growth in the number of vehicles on Britain's roads. Ministers are preparing wide-ranging plans to change public attitudes to car travel, including the possible introduction of motorway tolls, congestion charging and parking taxes in city centres.

The forecast shows that road traffic is predicted to increase by 38 per cent by 2016, and by 60 per cent by 2031.

However, Ernie Thompson, chief executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, said: "These Govern-

ment forecasts are much higher than we believe will actually happen. We forecast that average use of cars will actually come down and not go up by anything like these numbers."

Glenda Jackson, the Minister for London Transport, at the show to launch an updated version of the London taxi, said: "This Government is not anti-car just anti over-dependence on the use of cars. It is not a question of curbing cars but of providing real alternatives to people so that they do not have to use their cars so often."

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Released fans seek protection of press

Italian police last night followed the three English fans to a Rome hotel after they were released from the city's Central Regio Court Prison. Mark Richens, Paul Walker and Chris Jackson said they were "absolutely petrified" that they would be beaten up again by police. All three men talked briefly to reporters who met them outside the jail. They asked them not to leave them alone in the city and reporters made arrangements for them to book into a hotel because they were released too late to catch a direct flight home. Mr Richens, who runs the marketing agency in which all three are involved, said: "We've done absolutely nothing wrong. We've got responsible jobs and our business depends on our good reputation."

#### UN to investigate police

The United Nations is to investigate complaints of police harassment from lawyers defending IRA suspects. The lawyers claim they have been threatened and intimidated when visiting their clients, and have received threatening telephone calls. The UN said its special investigator on the independence of judges and lawyers would visit London next week and then Belfast. The Royal Ulster Constabulary said it would co-operate with his investigation.

#### New steps to fight fraud

New fraud courts with specially trained judges and a new right for prosecuting authorities to sue racketeers for multiple damages were called for by the Solicitor General last night. In his first big speech since taking office as the Government's junior law officer, Lord Falconer of Thoroton also confirmed the Government is looking at scrapping jury trial for complex fraud. He told City lawyers that the legal armory on fraud was outdated.

#### Hillsborough decision

Police involved in the Hillsborough disaster have dropped their action in the Court of Appeal against an award of more than £200,000 to a man whose teenage half-brother was among the 96 Liverpool fans to die in the 1989 disaster. John McCarthy, 36, a Liverpool season-ticket holder, won the damages in December for post-traumatic stress disorder. The Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police had agreed to pay Mr McCarthy's legal costs.

#### 'Body belt' convict died

A prisoner died after he was held in a "body belt" restraint for 24 hours after struggling with prison officers, an Exeter inquest heard yesterday. Dennis Stevens, 29, was found dead in his cell at Dartmoor Prison in October 1995 with his hands manacled to his wrists by a device criticised by the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment. A few weeks previously Stevens had been a model prisoner.

#### Last post for labrador

A family dog with a disfiguring postmen's injury was ordered to be destroyed after his second attack in four years. Hanky Punky, a ten-year-old labrador cross, bit Tim Coysh's ankle while he was on his rounds in Torridge, Devon, causing a 2in wound. Elaine Enright, 32, admitted having a dog dangerously out of control in a public place. She was given an absolute discharge and banned from keeping dogs for two years.

#### Settlement over tackle

Ian Knight, whose potential career as a Sheffield Wednesday and England footballer was shattered by a tackle that shattered his leg, in 1987, accepted an undisclosed sum in compensation. At the High Court in Sheffield, Mr Knight accepted the "out-of-court" settlement of his negligence claim against the former Chester striker Gary Bennett and his club over the injuries sustained in an FA Cup tie.

#### Web style for students

Cigars are in and alcohol is out for university undergraduates, according to 4-D, an Internet magazine for students launched tomorrow by the publishers of The Times. The website explores essential lifestyle issues, including arts, sport, food and drink and travel. Some features come from The Times but much of the material is contributed by students. The website address is <http://www.4-d.co.uk>.

## Thanks, but not enough says BMA

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

DOCTORS' leaders welcomed the extra money but warned it would not be enough to ensure there was no winter crisis in hospitals. The British Medical Association told the Government in the summer that £500 million was needed to avert a crisis this year and now believes that even that amount would not be enough.

James Johnson, chairman of the BMA's consultants and specialists committee, said: "We shall need to be extremely careful to be sure that this money is focused on opening up capacity so that we can be sure that people are not left lying for hours on trolleys this year. We also need to have a small amount left over to

ensure that we can carry out some of the non-urgent work, otherwise waiting lists are going to go into free-flight.

"If all that happens with this money is that hospital managers use it to offset overdrafts it will disappear into a bottomless pit."

Consultants from around the country had given the association a gloomy snapshot of the way the winter crisis was already causing problems. At the West Middlesex University Hospital in north London, overnight and lengthy trolley stays were now so routine that the meals service included trolleys in corridors as part of its regular rounds.

## Charity shuns tobacco funding

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

ONE of Britain's largest charities announced yesterday that it would no longer give grants to any research teams who receive funding from the tobacco industry. The Cancer Research Campaign, which is providing £49 million to scientists this year, decided to ban grants to faculties or departments "tainted by tobacco money" as part of its campaign against smoking, which kills 120,000 people a year in Britain.

The move was prompted by last year's announcement that British American Tobacco was to give the University of Cambridge £1.5 million to fund a chair of

International Relations. After months of consultation with legal experts, the charity has drawn up a code of conduct for research institutions.

Faculties in about 20 universities are currently receiving funds from tobacco companies. The charity will honour all existing contracts, but will not extend them unless the faculties drop their tobacco funding first.

Announcing the ban, Dr Gordon McVie the campaign's director general said: "The tobacco industry has a long history of gaining respectability by funding research and facilities in our centres of academic excellence. Now it is only a matter of time before the practice stops and we break that addiction to

tobacco funding." Tessa Jewell, the Health Minister preparing legislation to ban tobacco advertising and sponsorship, congratulated the campaign.

A spokesman for the Tobacco Manufacturers' Association said: "Our reaction is one of disappointment. We feel we are being tarred with the insinuation that funding from the tobacco industry in the past to researchers has influenced their conclusions, which is totally untrue. A third of the population are our customers. There's a feeling of wanting to plough something back into the community."

Between 1988 and 1994, 269 research papers published in the UK acknowledged support from the industry.

## Ex-MPs moving to Lords front bench

By James Landale, Political Reporter

FORMER Tory MPs who stood down or were defeated at the last election have been given new jobs in a shake-up of the Opposition frontbench in the House of Lords. Lord Cope of Berkeley, the former Northampton MP and former junior Northern Ireland minister, is the senior spokesman on Northern Ireland. Lord Roberts of Conwy, the former

Conwy MP and former Welsh minister, is the senior spokesman on Wales.

Sir Terence Higgins, the former Worthing MP and former chairman of the Treasury Select Committee, will shortly take up his seat in the Lords as senior spokesman on Social Security.

Lord Moyihan, the former Sports minister who recently won his right to the title, becomes the senior foreign office spokesman.

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# Galliano opens his doors to bourgeoisie

FROM GRACE BRADBERRY,  
STYLE EDITOR, IN PARIS

JOHN GALLIANO joined the bourgeoisie yesterday, presenting a Parisian version of Hinge and Bracket in a recreation of a turn-of-century mansion. Models moved from boudoir to bathroom, practised at a grand piano and played billiards in his second ready-to-wear show for Christian Dior.

Galliano took a step closer to the French fashion establishment. Not only did he stage the show in the Carrusel du Louvre, Paris's purpose-built catwalk venue — a break with his unusual venues of the past — but his collection was the most wearable yet.

Long, streamlined riding jackets with Dior pockets and gloved sleeves opened the first section of the show, "lunching out". Another, "business meetings", included high-waisted, loose, pinstriped trousers worn over, not under, double-breasted jackets.

The collection was dominated by evening dresses,

Photographs by  
Simon Walker

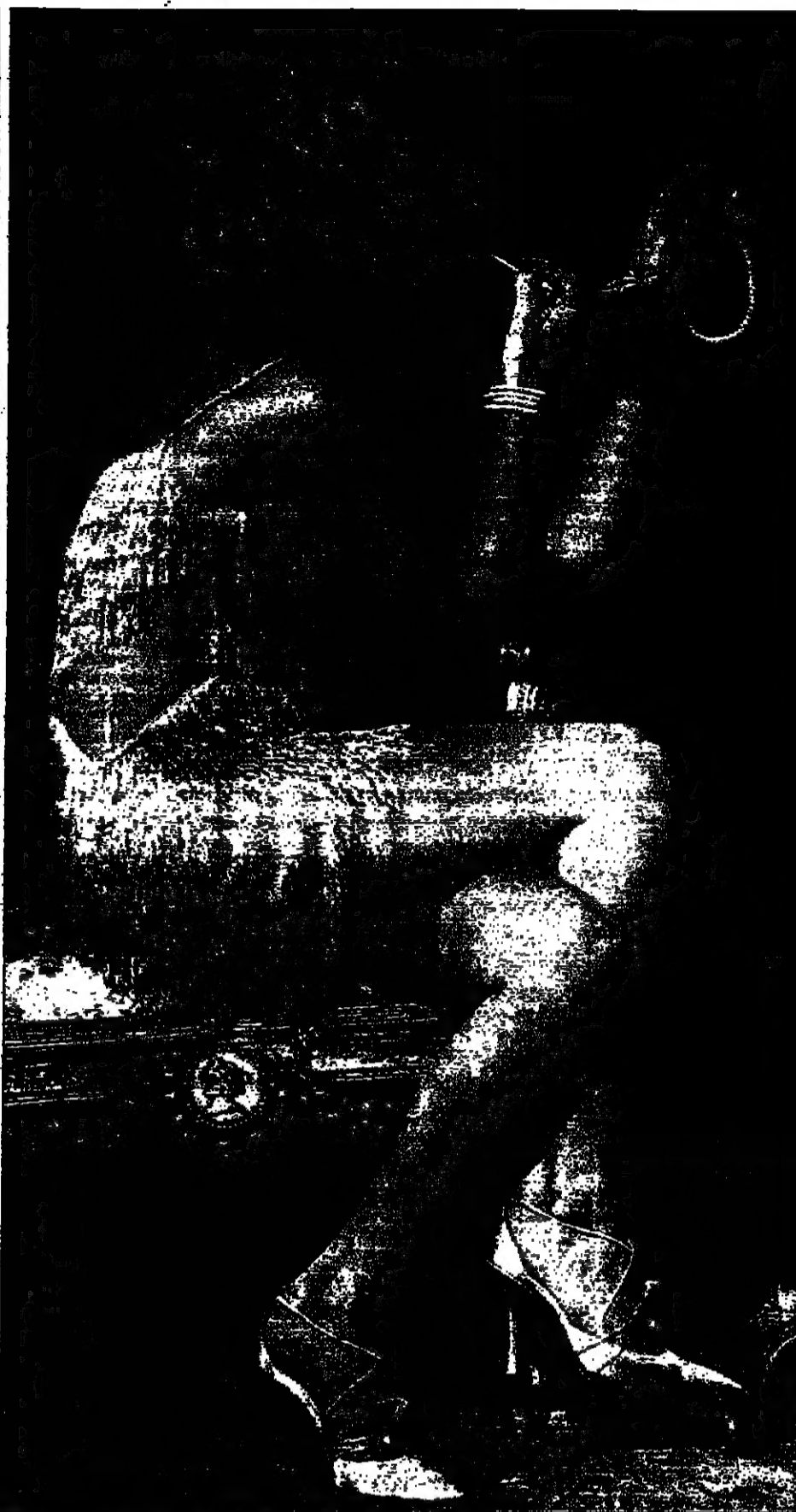
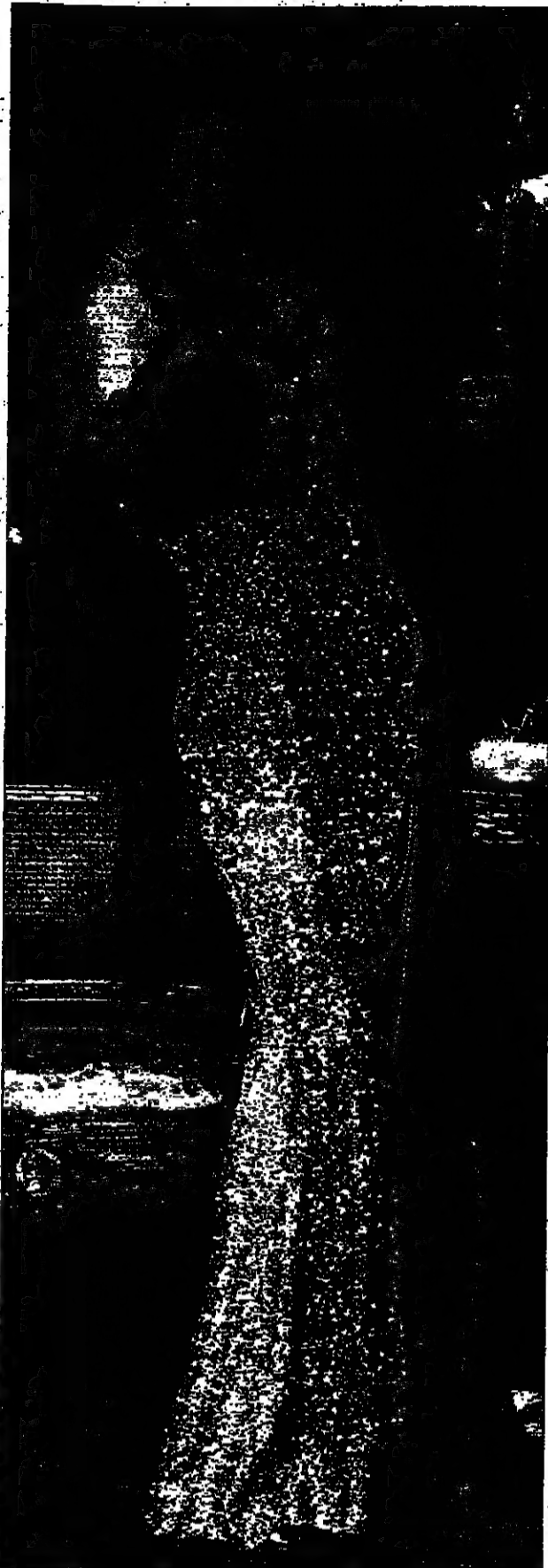
many of them a distillation of his last haute couture collection. Drapes of silver hung to the models and Indian jewellery, inspired by the Raj era, dripped from their throats.

Show-stoppers included a lingerie-strap dress, encrusted with lilac silk herringbone fringing, with diamond patterns bared on the hips, and a long mermaid-line dress, embroidered with Art Deco designs in silver thread.

A shawl over-dress was worn with a silk sheath beneath, while Galliano's trademark bias-cut cocktail dresses had train-effect hems sweeping out from drape backs.

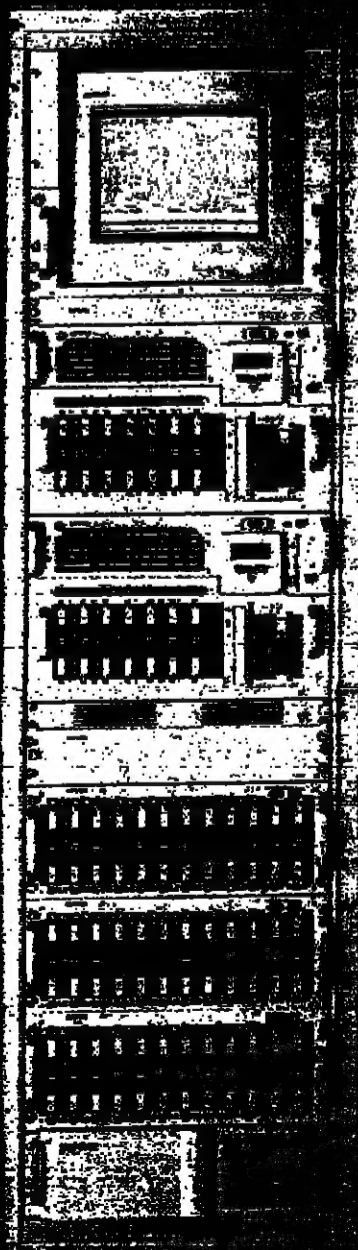
Whether today's bourgeois Parisians will buy Galliano's vision of their glamorous past is another matter. While Galliano's creativity is not in doubt, he has still to prove his ready-to-wear collections can be commercial.

With his move to Dior, the British designer has adopted a more conservative personal style. Yesterday, in place of the saris and dreadlocks that were once his trademark, he wore a sober suit and his hair was groomed to a slick bob.



At home with elegance: the Dior ready-to-wear collection yesterday in John Galliano's version of a turn-of-century Parisian mansion. Evening wear dominated the show

## FULL ON.



intel  
inside  
COMPAQ

## Mother on £45,000 'can spare nothing for student son'

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A MOTHER earning more than £45,000 a year and living in a house worth £230,000 pleaded hardship yesterday and said that she could not afford to finance her son through university.

Margaret Macdonald, 53, from Edinburgh, is being sued by her son Patrick, 20, for £400-a-month living expenses while he completes his law degree at Aberdeen University. He left home to live with his father four years ago and has been estranged from his mother since.

But at an interim hearing at Edinburgh Sheriff Court yesterday, Jenny Gibbs, Mrs Macdonald's solicitor, said that "startling" though it might seem, Mrs Macdonald, a Scottish Office solicitor, was struggling to make ends meet and had no money spare for maintenance. "She is living at a level perilously close to the limit of her overdraft."

Since her acrimonious divorce in 1994, she had been the sole provider for her four other children. She was paying the £8,500 private school fees for the two youngest, Susannah, 15, and David, 16, and the mortgage on the "dilapidated" family home, which had been

remortgaged to pay her husband's debts. Her last holiday was in 1978.

Her former husband, Hugh, 54, who declared himself bankrupt after the divorce, and is now an unemployed advocate, had contributed nothing to the household, despite maintenance orders against him. Yet he had insisted the children stay at private school after he lost custody. He has since remarried and separated.

Mrs Gibbs claimed that Mrs Macdonald usually had an overdraft of about £2,000, although recently she had gone into credit because of a legacy, most of which had been spent on urgent roof repairs. Her two oldest daughters, Emily, 18, and Caroline, 22, both at university in Edinburgh, had done part-time jobs to top up their grants.

Mrs Gibbs argued that it was "not reasonable" to expect Mrs Macdonald to pay. Her son could finance his studies in other ways, through a student loan or casual work, she said.

"There is a degree of bad blood in these family relationships. But the defendant is not an irresponsible, absent parent. She is someone who has worked very hard in difficult

circumstances to do the very best for her children."

Martin Burns, Patrick Macdonald's solicitor, said his client claimed a full student grant of £1,739, but it barely covered his monthly rent of £167. He was now in his third year and had survived thanks to a £5,000 legacy. He had a factory job over the Easter and summer holidays but still started college with an overdraft.

He needed the £400 a month for food, textbooks, stationery and travel expenses, Mr Burns said. His client had considered a student loan, but was reluctant to get into debt so early in his life.

On face value Mrs Macdonald's accounts showed she had nothing to spare, but it was possible to see where she could spend "a wee bit less", Mr Burns said. The £600 a month on food and £120 phone bill appeared excessive. Other savings could be made from the £100 a month for clothing.

When asked by Sheriff Daphne Robertson whether Patrick had investigated claiming maintenance from his father, Mr Burns said he knew only that Mr Macdonald senior was unemployed. The hearing continues tomorrow.

## MEET PD JAMES QUEEN OF CRIME



PD James will be discussing her career and characters at a Times/Dillon forum on October 23 at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1, at 7.30pm.

Tickets, which cost £10 (concessions £7.50), include £2 off the price of her new book, *A Certain Justice*.

They can be ordered on: 0171-467 1613 (fax 0171-467 1690) e-mail: orders@gower.dillons.org.uk

## Neighbours' row costs £150,000

BY FRANCES GIBB  
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A 13-YEAR dispute between neighbours over a 3ft-wide strip of land ended yesterday at a total cost of at least £150,000.

Brian Connell and Ian Batchelor secured victory of a sort at the Court of Appeal over the 80ft-long boundary between their properties and a field belonging to Eric Tutt, a farmer, at Charnock, Buckinghamshire. But Mr Connell, 62, said he would have to sell his hardware business to finance the case, as well as cancelling his life insurance and cashing retirement investments.

The neighbours fought through a 31-

day county court hearing, spread over two and a half years. Finding for Mr Connell and Mr Batchelor, Lord Justice Pill said that the legal costs were "horribly daunting even to contemplate".

The disputed boundary between one of Mr Tutt's fields and the homes of Mr Batchelor and Mr Connell was 3ft at its widest, and the most contentious part was 1ft wide. Mr Tutt, who farms the 1,000-acre Middle Farm, claimed that the boundary should be further east while Mr Connell, of Chez Nous, and Mr Batchelor, of Regency Cottage, argued for a dividing line further west.

Judge Christopher Tyer had ruled in Mr Tutt's favour at Milton Keynes County Court, but that decision was

overturned yesterday by the Court of Appeal. Lord Justice Pill said Judge Tyer had had to cope with almost 300 photographs, together with many plans and diagrams and expert reports. As the case dragged on, Judge Tyer had "despaired" of its ever ending, commenting at one point that both sides appeared to have "a deathwish".

Lord Justice Pill, sitting with Lord Justice Nourse and Lord Justice Waller, upheld the boundary line claimed by Mr Connell and Mr Batchelor. Mr Tutt was also ordered to pay Mr Batchelor £150 for trespass.

The judges ordered Mr Tutt to pay two thirds of the action's legal costs and Mr Batchelor and Mr Connell one third.

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## Violence by parents blamed for truancy

By DAVID CHARTER

ALMOST a quarter of children who play truant from school are suffering physical abuse at home, a survey for the charity ChildLine has revealed.

Bullying was the main reason for truancy, reported by 59 of the 200 youngsters surveyed. Of the 44 who said they could not face school because of violence at home, 13 were found to be suffering sexual abuse and 31 other physical abuse. Two of these children had attempted suicide.

Some of the children felt trapped, with one 12-year-old girl too scared to go to school because of bullies, and too scared to go home because her father would "strap" her for playing truant. Only 11 children blamed the difficulty of studying for missing lessons.

Valerie Howarth, the charity's chief executive, said schools should encourage truant to talk about their problems with a teacher or friend.

# Stars spearhead drive for teacher excellence

Tony Blair has made education one of his priorities and enlisted celebrities in a cinema campaign, writes John O'Leary

CELEBRITIES from the worlds of entertainment, sport, business and politics are spearheading a £10 million campaign to avert an impending shortage of teachers and raise their status.

Cinema advertisements will feature 18 celebrities, including the Prime Minister, the England goalkeeper David Seaman and the actor John Cleese nominating their favourite teachers. Their message that "no one forgets a good teacher" is intended to transform the profession into one of the top three choices for graduates within five years.

The Teacher Training Agency, which launched the initiative at the British Library in London yesterday, is hoping to raise the standard of entrants to teaching at the same time as attracting many more applicants. The combination is seen as essential to enhancing the status of a profession increasingly shunned by the best-qualified graduates.

Plunging recruitment for secondary school training courses has brought fears of renewed shortages in important subjects such as mathematics and the sciences. Of the main subjects, only history attracts more than

two applicants for every place.

The advertising campaign, which will run in 2,000 cinemas in England and Wales from Friday, also features the pop singer Skin, Bruce Oldfield, Michael Grade, Stephen Hawking, Joanna Lumley, Sebastian Coe, Sir Terence Conran, Ben Elton, Bob Hoskins, Eddie Izzard, Steve McManaman, Jeremy Paxman, Sir David Puttnam, Anita Roddick and Sir David Attenborough.

Other elements of the initiative will include new fast-track courses for former teachers to return to the classroom and for graduates in other jobs to train on the job. There will also be a series of conferences aimed at attracting more members of ethnic minorities into teaching.

The targets set by the agency today also aim to ensure that by 2002:

□ teaching is among the top three

professions, rather than fifth most popular;

□ academic qualifications of student teachers match the average for all courses, rising from the present C and two D grades at A level to three Cs;

□ secondary training courses attract at least twice as many candidates as there are places; □ primary training attract at least three times as many candidates as there are places, compared with 2.3 to the place at present;

□ 95 per cent of graduate trainees to have at least a second class degree, rather than the current 88 per cent.

Anthea Millet, chief executive of the agency, said: "We want high-quality candidates to choose teaching as a profession for its personal and intellectual challenges and rewards. The aim is to attract the very best to the profession. That's the least we can

do for the nation's future and for our children."

Tony Blair, who nominates Eric Anderson, his English teacher at Fettes College and now Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, as his most inspirational teacher, said: "I am passionate about education, and I hope that many people who feel the same will respond to the TTA's campaign and help to raise standards."

Mr Blair welcomed his former housemaster to Downing Street to help to publicise the campaign. At the Edinburgh Independent school, Mr Anderson introduced him to his favourite novel, *Julius Caesar*. Mr Anderson joked that, watching the Prime Minister's dramatic performance at last week's Labour Party conference, "I thought what a good job I had done."

Teaching unions welcomed the initiative, but warned that improvements were necessary in the pay and conditions of teachers if targets were to be met. Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, said: "Advertising must not be too far ahead of reality."



Tony Blair and his former housemaster, Eric Anderson, yesterday

## Class acts who gave famous pupils a start

By PAUL WHITTAKER

ONE of the teachers featured in the recruitment campaign is geography master David Jackson, who made a big impression on Sebastian Coe during his years at Tipton School, Sheffield.

Mr Jackson, 58, who retired three years ago, said he was known as "a bit of a slave-driver" for pushing Mr Coe to pass his examinations a year earlier than usual. "He always looked small for his age, but had the capacity to beat boys far better physically endowed because of his natural talent."

Mr Jackson, who kept in touch with his star pupil, fondly recalled how sports bookmakers refused to accept a bet that Mr Coe would win a gold medal at the Moscow or Los Angeles Olympics several years before the event.

"He rang me up to tell me he had won the gold medal and I asked him what he thought as he crossed the line and he replied, 'I thought of all that money you could have won.'"

Bob Cox, a 59-year-old former PE teacher at Kimberworth Comprehensive School, was the teacher England goalkeeper David Seaman liked best. Mr Cox said: "He was a smashing lad who could have turned his hand to almost any sport. If he had of taken up golf, he would have hit it 250 yards."

"But, unlike some of the young footballers you see who have blanks between the ears, he was also very brainy."

The Liverpool and England midfielder Steve McManaman nominated Noel O'Neill, who coached the St John's junior school football team in Kirkdale, Liverpool. Mr O'Neill said: "I'm dumb-founded that he nominated me. There's nothing special about my life. I'm just an ordinary person doing a job."

"I noticed Steve when he first came into the 7 to 8-year-

old juniors. His ball control, dribbling in the yard at play-time, was phenomenal. But we decided not to exploit him and put him with the older boys until he was mentally ready for it."

"He was never arrogant, he was the sort of bloke of that age you'd be quite happy to have as your son."

Ben Elton's favourite teacher, Gordon Vallins, 63, directed the author and comedian in school plays between 1977 and 1978 at South Warwickshire College of Education (now Stratford upon Avon College).

Mr Vallins said: "He was highly individualistic, energetic and the only student who wrote two full-length plays in three years while still completing all his other studies."

Skin, the lead singer of the indie rockers Skunk Anansie, nominated Ruth Webb, her former English teacher at St Martin-in-the-Field School at Tulse Hill, South London. "I knew her by another name, but I will help to keep her secret," said Ms Webb, now a schools inspector.

"If she were on Radio 3 I'd probably know a lot more about her music. I taught her in the 1980s when she was a lively, somewhat mischievous, first-year student."



Sebastian Coe: teacher was a "slave-driver"

## Ain't no point in grammar lessons

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A THIRD of secondary schools fail to give explicit lessons in grammar, punctuation and spelling, the Queen's English Society said yesterday. In a survey of English teachers, one in 20 criticised colleagues with a poor grasp of formal language for perpetuating students' problems.

This was borne out by some of the written replies to the survey. The society noted numerous errors, including one reply with seven mistakes in 15 lines. This teacher said: "Grammar is boring and irrelevant. Students to whom grammar [sic] may be important subconsciously gain an understanding of it."

Another said that it was not his job to improve anything or anyone, but to reconcile human beings to the world. Another said: "I do not think that teaching spelling rules is helpful, as

there are so many exceptions to the rules."

A total of 318 teachers replied to the survey. Most preferred to teach language issues as they arose in teenagers' work, and no difference was found between comprehensive and grammar schools in the amount of time spent on explicit grammar, punctuation and spelling lessons.

One in five pupils starting secondary school was said to have poor literacy standards, which teachers blamed on the video culture and lack of encouragement to read. The biggest factor holding back the improvement of standards at secondary school was said to be class size. The society, which promotes accurate formal English, called for annual grammar, spelling and punctuation tests to monitor pupils' performance.

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An artist's view of the Amritsar massacre in 1919, when British troops shot protesters

## Queen heals open wound of Amritsar

Christopher Thomas reports on the most successful day so far of the royal tour to India and Pakistan

THE Queen atoned on behalf of Britain yesterday for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar, one of the greatest atrocities of the Raj, with flowers, a minute's silence and a bow in homage to the dead. The poignancy of the gesture touched India, and especially Punjab, healing a wound unintended for 78 years.

She walked down the same alleyway through which 50 soldiers commanded by Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer

to take up positions at the entrance to the small square in 1919. The soldiers formed a semi-circle and fired on hundreds of peaceful demonstrators until 379 lay dead and at least 1,200 injured.

There are still bullet holes in the walls surrounding the square, but the Queen did not stop to examine them in a brisk walk round what is now a memorial park. She slowed as she passed a huge well, from which 120 bodies of people trying to escape the bullets were retrieved, but did not look into its depths. The demonstrators had been protesting about curfew restrictions after riots in which five Englishmen were killed.

Yesterday the Duke of Edinburgh

paused to read a notice at the entrance of the park, declaring: "This place is saturated with the blood of about 2,000 Hindu, Sikh and Muslim patriots who were martyred in a non-violent struggle to free India from British domination." He expressed surprise at the stated number of casualties, which does not tally with the official toll, and inquired: "It wasn't 2,000, was it?"

The royal couple walked to a

satisfied. As the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh left the park, they signed the visitors' book but wrote nothing in the comments column.

This was the most successful and moving portion of the state visit to Pakistan and India so far, and certainly the most enthusiastic. They were greeted on the journey from the airport to a rousing reception by thousands of schoolchildren cheering and waving flags. Amritsar was festooned

Brass bands played, Sikhs gave the couple a warm welcome, and history seemed cleansed of a stain

shrine in the centre of the park, where they laid a wreath and stood silently for one minute. Sikh organisations that had planned demonstrations in support of demands for an outright apology announced hours earlier that they were calling off their protests. Because the Queen had come so close to apologising in a speech the night before, descendants of the dead, too, said they were

with welcoming signs draped across the streets. School brass bands played, Sikh religious leaders gave the couple a warm welcome, and history seemed suddenly cleansed of a stain.

Dyer died in 1927, a broken man, paralysed from a riding accident, still insisting that he had only done his duty. The only possible defence was that he may not have known that Jallianwala Bagh had no en-



The Queen is presented with a gold-leaf model of the Golden Temple by Sikh priests in Amritsar, where she was given a rousing welcome

## General inherited racism of the Raj

By Christopher Thomas

BRIGADIER-GENERAL Reginald Dyer was convinced of the righteousness of the British Empire. Indeed, he was born into it — in the Raj hill station of Murree, now in Pakistan, where he learnt the racism that defined his attitude to India and Indians.

His father was the first man successfully to brew beer in India. The Murree Brewing Co., in which he was managing partner, flourishes to this day, even if its sales are restricted by law to those Pakistanis who can demonstrate that they are not Muslim.

In 1916 the younger Dyer was put in command of operations in south-eastern Persia. A year later he had a serious riding accident, which gradually affected the movement of his lower limbs. He took a year's sick leave in England but insisted on returning to India. By 1921 he

was paralysed. At the time of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919 he had been suffering constant severe pain.

He was forced to resign from the Indian Army after the massacre, only months before he was due to retire at the age of 55. He died aged 62 in Long Ashton, near Bristol, of a cerebral haemorrhage.

There was an assassination attempt on the general when a Sikh burst into his house in England, only to shoot a house guest by mistake.

The general had a distinguished military record which included campaigns in Afghanistan, where he was decorated for bravery.

His action at Jallianwala Bagh appalled most people, but there was a groundswell of sympathy. The Morning Post launched a fundraising campaign, which produced the then huge sum of £26,000.



Dyer: forced to resign from the army after massacre

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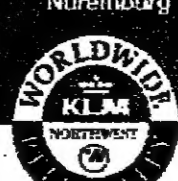
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# Doubts remain over Rikki care services

By JOANNA BALE

SOCIAL services managers were severely criticised yesterday over the death of six-year-old Rikki Neave. A Department of Health report highlighted "serious failures" in Cambridgeshire County Council's child protection services and said there were still "deep concerns" about its ability to protect vulnerable children.

Sir Herbert Laming, chief inspector of the department's Social Services Inspectorate, said: "At this time I cannot be confident that children at risk in the county are safe from significant harm or neglect. Some progress has been made and I know that recently appointed senior managers are now taking a constructive and positive approach."

"The council has accepted the need to implement our recommendations in full. We will go back to see they do."

Paul Boateng, a junior health minister, accused the council of a "legacy of incompetence" at senior levels. Rikki's family renewed their

calls for a public inquiry to force former council executives, who have since left for other positions, to be made accountable. Sandra Chesney, the boy's aunt, described them as "rats abandoning a sinking ship".

Rikki was found strangled in woodland near his home in

was three, turned him out of the house in his pyjamas early on a December morning.

Rikki had been placed on an at-risk register several months before he died. Neave had repeatedly asked social workers to take her son into care after threatening to kill him.

The report from the inspection

had fallen behind schedule. Sir Herbert said: "Despite past statements by the council, serious and deep concerns remain about its ability to protect vulnerable children. Dedicated frontline staff have struggled to do their best. Their efforts have been frustrated by an absence of direction, effective procedures and efficient management."

The report says the social services department had no clear child protection policy; managers had not appeared to take decisive action in teams with substantial problems; and some "chronically neglected children" were not being properly protected.

It calls for decisive action if a team of social workers cannot cope: reviews of staff workloads and the way resources are distributed; more training in tackling hostile and uncooperative parents; and child protection training for all staff who need it.

Rikki's grandfather, Maurice Harvey, of March, Cambridgeshire, yesterday called



Rikki Neave, who was strangled, was on a risk register. His mother had asked for him to be taken into care.



**At this time I cannot be confident that children on the at-risk register in Cambridgeshire are safe from significant harm or neglect**

Peterborough in November 1994. His mother, Ruth, 29, was cleared of his murder last year but jailed for seven years after admitting five charges of cruelty to Rikki and two of his sisters. Neave, a drug abuser, had burnt one daughter's hand with a cigarette, squirted washing-up liquid down Rikki's throat and, when he

torate, produced after a four-week inspection at the council's headquarters in Cambridge, highlights "serious failures" in child protection services. It says more than two years passed after Rikki's death before the council drew up proposals to deal with flaws in its child protection services — and already staff

for a public inquiry after turning up uninvited with other members of the family to a council press conference. He said: "The people at the top should have been sacked, but instead they have all moved on to cushy, well-paid jobs. Only

a public inquiry will force them to tell what really went on."

Brian Waller, who has been acting head of the social services department for two weeks, said people had to draw their own conclusions

about the departure of senior managers since Rikki's death. A council spokesman added that none had been given "golden handshakes" and that management had been completely overhauled.

Mr Waller said: "It is quite clear that a new attitude prevails now. The family can be reassured that whatever happened in the past will be put right by next spring. There is a commitment to turn it into the best social services department in the country."

Mr Boateng is to meet senior councillors today to discuss the report. He said: "I

want a pledge that the council will accelerate its action plan. Vital and robust measures are needed to protect children from the evil of abuse."

Last year a report by the Bridge Child Care Consultancy was also critical of the social services department. There

was further dismay when it was revealed that a former senior manager had been systematically abusing children in his care.

Ruth Neave's solicitor, Paul Bacon, said that, during the trial, social workers had told him about management problems.

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**Influential jobs for people at heart of the case**

By JOANNA BALE

THREE years ago, Tad Kubisa was the £65,000-a-year Director of Social Services. He spent a year as president of the Association of Directors of Social Services, advising the Government. He later stepped down from that role and officially retired from the council at the end of last year. He is now a consultant and lives in Newmarket, Suffolk, but was not at home to comment yesterday.

Ted Unsworth was the man who took over from Mr Kubisa. He became Director of Social Services at the beginning of the year, during the period covered by the inquiry, which criticised the slow pace of improvements. Last month he quit his £70,000-a-year job to become adviser to the board of trustees of the national alcohol and drugs charity Turning Point.

Mr Unsworth, 54, had spent 20 years with the council. His office at Turning Point said that he had asked for calls to be referred back to the council.

At the time of Rikki's death, Matt Bukowski was social services director for north Cambridgeshire. He has since left to become Director of Social Services in Lincolnshire, and yesterday declined to comment.

Gordon Lister was the

£95,000-a-year chief executive of the council when the Neave scandal occurred. He left last month, to take up a post as chief executive of the Papworth Trust in Cambridgeshire, a charity that helps disabled people. He was unavailable for comment yesterday.

Debbie Lawson and Linda Marshall, the case workers for Rikki Neave, and Sue O'Halloran, the practice manager, have also left. Ms Lawson is a social worker for Buckinghamshire County Council. Ms Marshall works in the private sector.

Three other social workers who were suspended have been reinstated. Other senior officers are having to re-apply for their jobs.



Lister: he was chief executive of council.

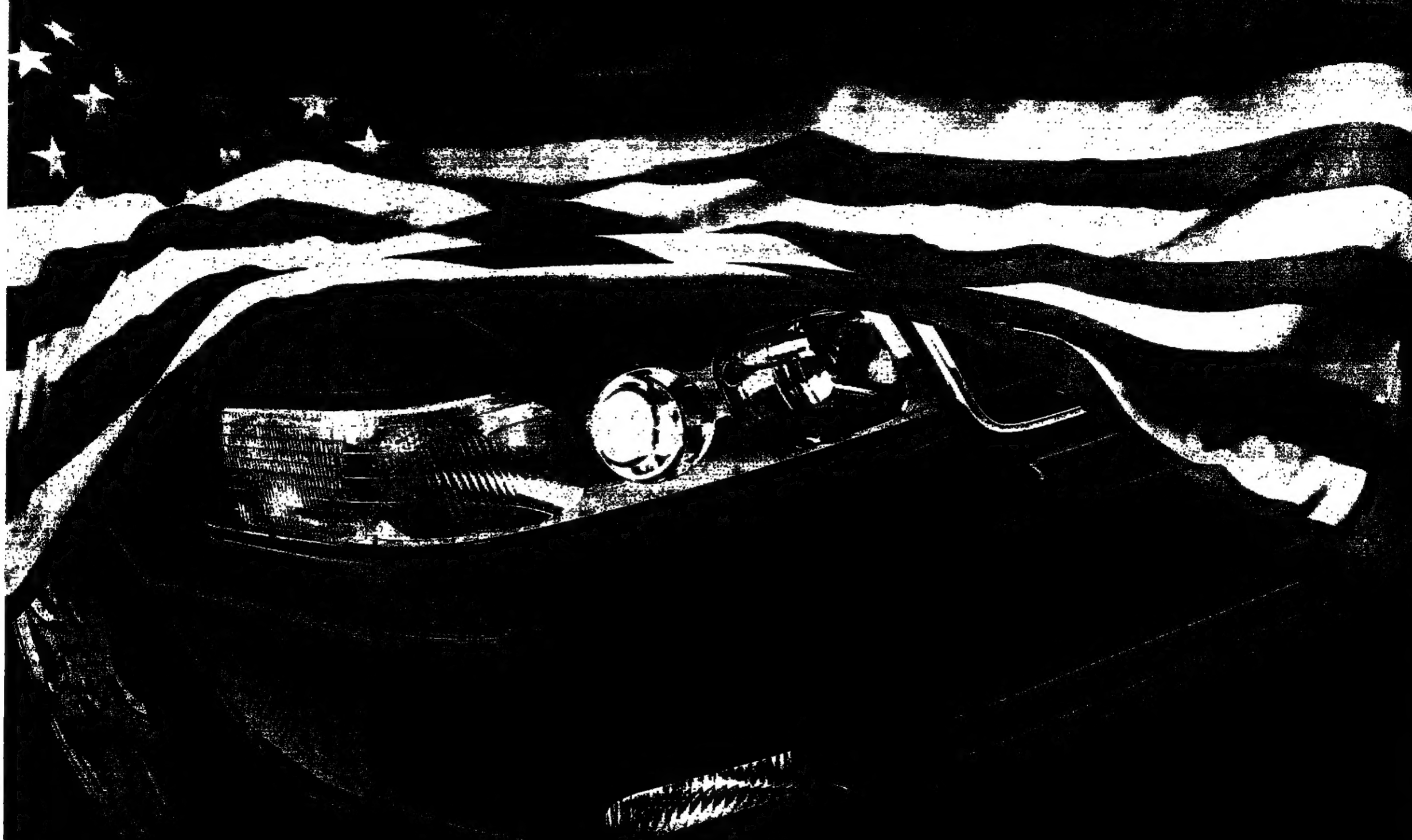
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# Rising violence defies general fall in crime

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

BURGLARIES and car crime are falling but violence is on the increase, according to the latest figures for serious crime in England and Wales issued yesterday by the Home Office.

Overall the figures reveal a fall of 5.5 per cent to 4.8 million crimes for offences committed between June 1996 and June this year. This is the first time the total has fallen below five million since 1989. Only five forces — the Metropolitan Police, Sussex, Gwent, North Wales and Norfolk — recorded any increases.

According to the figures, property crime was down 10 per cent to 4.4 million offences. Burglaries on homes dropped 10 per cent to 568,000 and car crime fell by 9 per cent to 1.2 million. All but four of the 43 police forces showed a fall in burglaries and 36 reported less car crime.

But the figures also show a 2 per cent rise in violent crime to 348,000 offences, including a 7.5 per cent increase in assaults to 246,000. The total includes 1,300 serious assaults regarded as life threatening. They rose by 10 per cent.

Police also logged a 6.6 per cent rise in sexual assaults to 15,000 cases. This included a 1 per cent rise in rapes, to 6,300 cases, which may be attributable partly to 320 male rape cases registered under new legislation. Rape cases have risen by 176 per cent in the

past 10 years, partly because of more sympathetic police spouses, but the number reported may still represent only 10 per cent of the total.

The only category of violent crime that fell in the 12 months was robbery, which mainly covers muggings. These dropped by 2.5 per cent to 70,500. In the previous 12 months they had risen by 14.8 per cent.

The Home Office figures show a 4.8 per cent rise for recorded crime in the Metropolitan Police area, but Scotland Yard said the figure did

not represent an increase under its new computerised recording system because the two accounting systems were not comparable.

Commenting on the figures, Chris Nuttall, director of research and statistics at the Home Office, said that the changes in property and violent crime could be linked to increased consumption of alcohol, spurred by economic recovery.

More money meant more drinking and this led to more violence. He said drug-related crime was more likely to be

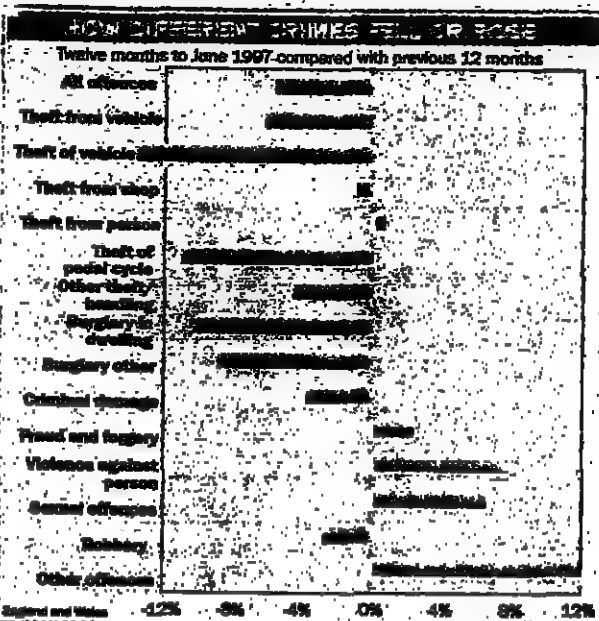
linked to theft and burglary. Burglaries generally fell in times of economic recovery.

He said violent offences had been rising since the Second World War and had rarely fallen. On average, there had been an annual rise of about 6.5 per cent in violent crime over the last 50 years.

Mr Nuttall admitted that the figures did not give a full picture of crime in Britain and said that there could be as many as 60 million crimes each year. He said the latest British Crime Survey in 1996 showed about 19 million crimes against households and the figures did not include the total crime against businesses. Many crimes were not reported and the Home Office statistics ignored others.

Next year the Home Office is launching a new accounting system which will increase the number of reported crimes by up to one million. For the first time the figures will include common assault, assault on a constable, dangerous driving, possession of drugs and tampering with vehicles.

Some groups of crimes will be divided into separate offences in an attempt by ministers to make the figures representative of victims. Alun Michael, the Home Office minister responsible for the police, said that, when someone broke into 20 cars in a car park, this would no longer be registered as a single offence.



Signs of confusion: depot worker Susan Pentrey with some of the confiscated warnings found at roadsides

## Warning - there's a joke ahead

IT IS a sight that can leave puzzled drivers reaching doubtfully for their Highway Code, or wondering if they have been on the road too long. Around Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, new road signs have been alerting motorists to the unexpected dangers of penguins, ghosts and sharks.

Others have featured a daisy-like flower, a fishbone, a jigsaw piece and a pair of lips. The signs, realistically created on red-bordered triangles, are the work of an unknown artist whose jokes started appearing a fortnight ago. Now

he has defied his most challenging critics by creating a sign featuring the local highways chief, and delivering it personally to the county highways depot.

The man walked into the depot at Bourton-on-the-Water, handed a brown-paper parcel to the receptionist, then left smiling. When staff opened the parcel,

they found a triangular sign bearing a picture of their boss, the divisional surveyor Lawrence Elocks.

"It was a very good cartoon of him — instantly recognisable," said David Flagg, an administration manager at the

depot. "Unfortunately, the receptionist did not get a description, although she can remember the smile as he left."

A dozen of the signs have been put into storage in the Bourton depot; workers do not have the heart to destroy them because they are so good. Mr Flagg said:

"We shall probably bring them out on display when we hold open days for the public. They are excellent works of art. Theoretically, if we ever find out who is responsible, we could prosecute him for putting up illegal road signs, but we probably wouldn't."

## Progress forces police horsemen to dismount

By PAUL WILKINSON

URHAM Constabulary yesterday became the latest police force to stand down its mounted section, in favour of new technology. Of the 43 forces in England and Wales, only 18 continue to run a mounted section.

But the day of the police horse is not yet done. Earlier this year, West Yorkshire decided to introduce armed patrols on the streets. A Leeds estate plagued by burglaries and vandalism, mounted police are still used at demonstrations and soccer matches, where the use of the horses has a calming effect. In Co Durham, where the only league team is Arlington, with crowds rarely more than 3,000, their presence is not so necessary.

The Association of Chief Police Officers of England and Wales said: "There is no overall trend; it is local solutions to local problems. It seems

urban forces still rely on mounted officers while rural ones have less need for them."

Eddy Marchant, Durham's Deputy Chief Constable, said: "The effectiveness of mounted patrols has been gradually overtaken by advancing technology. The reality is a helicopter or aeroplane can now



Police horses: still used for big football matches

operate more effectively in searches for missing people, while public-order problems in town centres can be better monitored by [closed-circuit] television cameras.

"While the operational uses of horse are becoming much more limited, their ceremonial and public relations value is not under question. But their retention can no longer be justified in strict operational terms, and money saved immediately by disbanding the unit will allow us to improve other services we provide."

The section's four constables and their civilian groom will be moved to new jobs, and their horses, Baron, Viscount, Marquis and Prince Bishop, will be given free to a suitable home. Mr Marchant said: "They will get the best of care and will not be sold on after what has been many years of sterling service."

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## WPC tells tribunal of sexual bullying

A policewoman told an industrial tribunal yesterday that a three-year campaign of sexual bullying by fellow CID officers got worse after she made a complaint.

Former detective Lesley Evans, 37, claimed she was subjected to a simulated sex ordeal by a drunken male officer while a colleague watched and gave marks out of ten. She said the officer also dropped his trousers in front of her, and that she was mocked by a cartoon about her depression and a photograph of male colleagues with their fingers through their lips.

The tribunal at Southampton was told that WPC Evans was the victim of a bullying campaign between August 1993 and March this year at the CID office in Ryde, Isle of Wight.

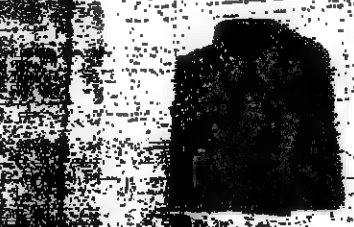
The married mother of two is claiming sexual discrimination against the Hampshire Constabulary. By October 1996 she could take the abuse no longer and made a formal complaint.

Yesterday she explained that, within hours of turning to senior officers, Hampshire Police had taken swift action to transfer two popular detectives away from the station. WPC Evans, of Ryde, told the hearing this had not been her intention and the bullying became much worse and quite open.

She said: "When it happened, it made things much worse for me. I had stirred up a hornet's nest and I was left me to deal with it."

The hearing continues.

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# 'Al Fayed is a liar and he has cost me everything'

NEIL HAMILTON'S claim about the sanctity of Harrods safe-deposit boxes dramatically turned the tables on Mohamed Al Fayed yesterday. It came at the end of a statement lasting two hours and 20 minutes, made to the Commons standards and privileges committee as Mr Hamilton sought to clear his name of the cash-for-questions allegations which have dogged him since 1993.

In his opening statement, made under oath in the full glare of the television cameras, Mr Hamilton repeatedly attacked the credibility of Mr Fayed and his employees as witnesses. It was two of Mr Al Fayed's secretaries who told Sir Gordon Downey's inquiry that, during the 1980s, they stuffed brown envelopes full of £50 notes for Mr Hamilton, and the Downey report concluded that there was "compelling evidence" that Mr Hamilton took up to £25,000 from the Harrods owner.

Allegations by Mr Al Fayed caused four ministers, including Mr Hamilton, to resign from the previous Government. While the other former MPs censured by Sir Gordon have apologised in written submissions, Mr Hamilton requested his "day in court". His redoubtable wife, Christine, was in the front row of the public seats.

Mr Hamilton was tense at the beginning of his evidence, but noticeably relaxed as the hearing continued. He said that the evidence about the safe-deposit box showed "Mr

**Andrew Pierce reports as MPs are asked to pick who took the money and who opened the box**

Fayed and his employees worked together to do things which are improper. I never took cash for questions."

When he began reading a signed statement by Bob Loftus, head of security between 1987-96, he was ordered to stop by Robert Sheldon, the committee chairman, who feared it would prejudice an outstanding libel trial involving Mr Al Fayed. After consulting with his legal team, Mr Hamilton proceeded.

Mr Loftus's job had included responsibility for the safe-deposit boxes at the store. It was only after Mr Al Fayed saw video footage of Tiny Rowland in December 1995 that he realised his old foe had a safe-deposit box there. Within minutes, the plot had been hatched to break into it.

John McNamara, current director of security at Harrods, was allegedly brought in to ensure that the break-in went ahead. There were documents and tapes inside. The box was first opened in December 1995, five years after a damning report

by the Department of Trade and Industry into the Al Fayed brothers' 1984 takeover of House of Fraser, which then included Harrods. Mr Rowland had bid unsuccessfully. According to the statement, at one point Mr Al Fayed had demanded of Mr Loftus: "Why didn't you bloody tell me about this when we had trouble with the DTI, that he had this box here?"

Mr Hamilton said: "What have we got here? We have the former detective chief superintendent at Scotland Yard, Mr McNamara, in charge of arresting shoplifters in Harrods by day, in conspiracy with the chairman of the store to break into safe-deposit boxes and rob their customers by night."

"If the head of security can behave like this under Fayed's orders, why should Fayed's personal secretary and personal assistant make any resistance, particularly when two of them are implicated in this story as it is?"

The statement from Mr Loftus said he was rewarded with a white envelope stuffed full of cash, as was the locksmith, Robert Hamilton, from Surrey. They were both told to keep their mouths shut. But Mr Hamilton said that evidence from other Al Fayed employees had been enough "to condemn me to a lifetime of opprobrium and unemployment."

Mr Hamilton invoked the memory of the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six as victims of miscarriages of justice. On the same week that



Neil Hamilton and his wife, Christine, yesterday. He said: "There are no depths to which Mr Fayed will not stoop"

the Downey report was published, the convictions of the Bridgewater Four had been quashed after 10 years. He said: "They were convicted on the basis of false evidence, given on oath in a court of law, where the burden of proof lay firmly on the prosecution, where the standard of proof for conviction was beyond reasonable doubt, not a Parliamentary Commissioner's hunch. I've effectively been convicted of a criminal offence

— and without the benefit of rules which have been developed over hundreds of years in the courts to ensure a fair trial.

"These aren't just technical quibbles. It's cost me a promising career as a minister, my seat in Parliament, its resultant unemployment, not only for me, but also for my wife, who was my secretary. Sir Gordon's report effectively renders me an outcast and effectively unemployable. It isn't just my reputation which

is at risk here, it is the reputation of Parliament itself. What I am held to have done has besmirched you all."

Mr Hamilton said of Mr Fayed: "He has a well-known record of deceit and invention. The Department of Trade and Industry report into his acquisition of the House of Fraser had branded him a liar and a cheat."

In an apparent reference to Fayed claims to have passed on the last words of Diana,

Princess of Wales — the existence of which have been denied by the hospital which treated her and by her family — Mr Hamilton said: "In the course of the past few weeks, we have been reminded once again of Mr Fayed's innate capacity for invention. There are no depths to which Mr Fayed and his acolytes will not stoop to achieve his ends, even to exploiting one of the most poignant personal tragedies in modern times."

## Appeal attacks validity of Downey report

By Frances Gibb  
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

MOHAMMED Al Fayed takes his battle to the Court of Appeal today to win the right to challenge the validity of a report by Sir Gordon Downey, the watchdog on parliamentary malpractice.

Sir Gordon's report in March cleared the former Home Secretary, Michael Howard, of allegations by Mr Fayed that he took £1.5 million in bribes from Tiny Rowland, former managing director of Lonrho, through an intermediary in 1987.

Mr Fayed alleges the bribe was accepted by Mr Howard, then consumer affairs minister, in exchange for opening a DTI inquiry into the House of Fraser takeover by the Fayed brothers.

In a legal action which raises the important constitutional issue of whether the Parliamentary Commissioner's actions can be reviewed by the courts, Mr Al Fayed, owner of Harrods, sought to challenge the report in the High Court.

But in his ruling in April Mr Justice Sedley held that he did not have jurisdiction over Sir Gordon's actions as he answers directly to Parliament.

Today, David Pannick, QC, counsel for Mr Fayed, the owner of Harrods, will appeal against Mr Justice Sedley's ruling.

Mr Pannick had argued before Mr Justice Sedley that the report should be quashed as "unreasonable" on the grounds that Sir Gordon had failed to question several witnesses and, he alleged, was not thorough enough in looking into Mr Howard's acquisition of funds and property.

The Parliamentary Commissioner should not be immune from review by the courts, he said. He performed an important governmental function involving matters of substantial public interest, that is conducting official investigations into allegations of breaches of parliamentary standards.

Stephen Richards, counsel for Sir Gordon, argued that his client was an officer of Parliament appointed internally after the recommendations of the Nolan report into parliamentary standards. His role was to investigate complaints about MPs' conduct.

"The House of Commons is not subject to the courts in internal proceedings," he said. In his ruling Mr Justice Sedley said that "constitutional divide" between the judiciary and Parliament was of "great historical importance." Sir Gordon, he said, was not subject to scrutiny because he had been appointed internally by Parliament to report directly to a select committee.

## Security head tells of disquiet

BOB LOFTUS was director of security at Harrods until 1996. He had previously been a major in the Special Investigations Branch of the Royal Military Police.

He said last night that he lost his job in February 1996. "My personal belief is that my disquiet over that incident [the alleged opening of a safe deposit box] coupled with other matters led to my demise."

"I was not at all happy with that, that is for sure. It had never happened before. It was of some considerable concern to me. I consider myself a man of honour and integrity, which I would not describe Mohamed Fayed as, nor John McNamara."



## Decade of bitter rivalry

THE Hamilton affair has its origins in the struggle between Tiny Rowland and Mohamed Al Fayed for control of Harrods in the 1980s.

Neil Hamilton was one of a number of Tory MPs to slide with Mr Al Fayed. The atmosphere between the two sides was clouded by insults and

writh, until in 1993 Mr Fayed and Mr Rowland reached a legal settlement (above).

Mr Rowland said yesterday that he was aware of a police investigation into alleged tampering with his deposit box, but had no comment to make. Harrods has denied tampering with the box.

## Ex-detective worked on fraud team

JOHN McNAMARA, right, head of security for Harrods Holdings Plc, has worked with Mr Al Fayed for more than ten years since leaving Scotland Yard. Last month he was in Paris dealing with the aftermath of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Mr McNamara, who retired as a detective chief superintendent, joined the Metropolitan Police after leaving the Merchant Navy.

He worked across London and was based at one time in Carter Street, in southeast London, as a detective inspector. He also spent much of his career in the Fraud Squad, where he worked in the public corruption section and was



involved in internal investigations involving malpractice by civilian staff.

At one stage he worked for the Complaints Investigation Bureau.

He left the Fraud Squad in the mid-1980s to join the House of Fraser and took a senior security position after another former Scotland Yard man left. He then moved over to Harrods.

## Locksmith rejects 'ridiculous' claims

THE locksmith accused by Neil Hamilton of being called in to open the safe deposit box has won competitions for picking locks.

Roy Hamilton, who is self-employed and has worked for the police, said he regularly opened safe deposit boxes at Harrods and had been working in the store only a few days ago.

Last night he said that he could not recall any particular job there in December 1995. He denied being handed an envelope stuffed full of £50 notes and said his work would be "finished" if there was any suggestion of impropriety. The accusations by Neil Hamilton were ludicrous and unexpected.

"It sounds like a ridiculous

James Bond film. The idea of my creeping in under cover of darkness to open the box. I simply cannot afford to be associated with anything criminal. I open safe deposit boxes every day of the week. A particular venture doesn't stick in my mind," he said.

"What I do know is that I would have to be handed an awful lot of £50 notes to risk my livelihood in such a way. They couldn't pay me enough for that."

Mr Hamilton, who is in his forties and said he had worked as a locksmith for "considerable years", said he had never met Mohamed Al Fayed. "I've never even seen him. The names Loftus and McNamara don't mean much to me either."

## Apologetic Short reveals her frustration over Montserrat

Development Minister tells MPs of confused decision-making, reports Nicholas Watt

CLARE SHORT, the International Development Secretary, yesterday admitted making mistakes during the crisis over the Montserrat volcano, but laid most of the blame on a "quite dreadful" decision-making process.

Ms Short had infuriated the island's leaders when she said, during a newspaper interview at the height of the crisis in August, that their demands were so unreasonable that "they will be wanting golden elephants next". Asked yesterday by MPs on a Commons select committee about those remarks, she said: "I completely and absolutely regret that it was alleged that I said that ... I was

foolish enough to use that startling phrase, which I now regret."

In a two-hour appearance before the International Development Committee, Ms Short said that her response to the disaster had been hampered by the "many players" involved. She said that the Foreign Office had overall responsibility for the island as a dependent territory, her own department was responsible for the island's budget, and the Government of Montserrat ran the island.

Her inability to intervene at the most basic level was illustrated

when Andrew Rowe, the Conservative MP for Faversham and Mid Kent, expressed astonishment that no census had been conducted on the island since people had started to leave. Ms Short said: "Thank you, Andrew. Now you understand my frustration."

Mr Rowe asked why, as a last resort, the Royal Navy could not be drafted in to count the population. Ms Short said: "I do not have the authority to do that."

Ms Short told the committee that she had "tried and tried" to have the island's sewers cleaned

up, but was powerless to act because the island's Government was responsible. She added that her department could provide vehicles to help, but only the island Government could use them.

An exasperated Ms Short said that handling the crisis "has been an enormously difficult responsibility for me. Part of the problem is the nature of the emergency. But a major part of the problem is that there are so many players in the decision-making, which is quite dreadful."

The volcano on Montserrat

erupted in 1995, destroying large parts of the island. It rumbled on until a massive explosion last June in which people were killed. The main town of Plymouth was evacuated and the airport closed.

In August, Britain organised a partial voluntary evacuation of the island, offering £2,500 to each adult to help islanders to move. The Montserrat Government accused Britain of providing inadequate assistance and of scaring islanders after George Foulkes, Ms Short's deputy, gave warning of a "cataclysmic explosion".

Montserrat scientists said that he had misinterpreted data.

MPs from the International Development Committee expected to visit Montserrat tomorrow will find that there has been little improvement in living conditions since Britain announced a rescue plan last month. There has been a pronounced increase in volcanic activity, and hundreds of Montserratians have been leaving.

A change in the wind direction has carried the ash over northern parts of the island which had previously been largely unaffected but an eruption powerful enough to affect these areas severely is thought "very unlikely".



Short: she now regrets her "golden elephants" remark

## It ran on BTR's engineering skills.

We'd like to congratulate Richard Noble, Andy Green and all their team on the hard work, dedication, skill and sheer courage that took ThrustSSC to its sound-barrier-shattering performance. Naturally, we're also proud of the fact that Hawker Energy Products supplied the state-of-the-art batteries to support



# Tory MP paid price of betraying trust

Voters say Piers Merchant did not warrant a second chance, write Daniel McGrory and Nicholas Watt

TORY officials in Beckenham said last night that they had been given no indication by Piers Merchant that he was about to resign. One said: "We believed him before the election, and stood by him when he said he had been set up with Miss Cox. We trusted him then, and now we are left looking a little foolish."

Weekend pictures of Mr Merchant with his friend Anna Cox, 18, proved too much for local stalwarts who rallied to his defence in March when allegations of their alleged affair first arose.

Margaret Howarth, chairman of the Beckenham Conservative Constituency Association, looked shaken as she read a prepared statement that blamed the tabloid press rather than the MP for what was seen as an unwanted by-election. "It is a really sad day for Piers and his family, and he is right to be most mindful of protecting his young children from further press harassment," she described him as an "exemplary MP who will be sorely missed".

Most Tories, however, were far less charitable yesterday.

## THE LOCAL ASSOCIATION

One senior figure in the association, revealed that there had been attempts to have Mr Merchant explain his controversial association with what he described as his teenage researcher at a special meeting on Thursday this week. "He was dragging this constituency into the mire, and we needed that to be stopped," the source said.

Bert Miles, a local Conservative councillor who has been a member of the Beckenham Conservative Constituency Association for 20 years, said Mr Merchant had "looked his goose". Mr Miles added: "He would have got the sack. Lots of people in the association have been telephoning me since the weekend saying once was enough. They could not forgive him a second time."

Mr Miles said that the association had supported Mr Merchant in March after accepting his explanation that he had been out canvassing with Miss Cox when the embarrassing pictures were taken.

"But this was a different story. He was away for four nights during the Conservative Party conference. I think he has let everybody down. The leaders of the association are probably breathing a sigh of relief. It has been quite a shock."

His sentiments were echoed in softer language by Eric Chaliker, a member of the association's executive, who said that Mr Merchant's resignation was "sadly" inevitable after the publication of the pictures in the *Sunday Mirror*. Local Conservatives felt bruised and it would have been "intolerable for both parties" if Mr Merchant had remained as an MP.

Asked on BBC Radio 4's *PM* whether he was surprised by the weekend allegations, Mr Chaliker said: "It is strange that a professional, stroke business, relationship between two people should have developed without the association having been informed... I feel let down by the circumstances."

Local officials insist Conservative Central Office had made no attempts in the past 48 hours to force any investigation into the MP's behaviour. One said: "They did not try and we would not have agreed to it anyway. That is not the way we do things."

Local voters in Beckenham High Street seemed more perplexed by the fact that the MP's wife had posed at the front door with Miss Cox to insist there was nothing untoward in Mr Merchant's association. Ian Grey, a lifelong Tory, said: "It takes some believing to get caught twice with the same girl and protest your innocence."

Claudia Bangs, 50, who voted for Mr Merchant in May, said: "I was prepared to give him a second chance, but not a third. So best he goes, the silly man."

Kathleen Lewis, 69, said: "I think it's a great pity he's gone, as it was a great source of entertainment for us. He obviously had a very loyal wife to stay in the same house as a blonde teenager."

Many constituents agreed that Mr Merchant had been an energetic and popular MP. Patrick Ellwood, 70, said: "I liked the man, but he left himself down and more importantly his voters. I thought he had been set up at first, but not any more."

By last night, the epitaphs on Mr Merchant's career had been written and Tory activists were more concerned to discuss the shortage of possible replacements.



Piers and Helen Merchant earlier this year. The Beckenham MP was said to be "an exemplary MP who will be sorely missed"

## 'I have decided to resign to protect family and friends'

THE statement from Piers Merchant that was issued to the Press Association news agency yesterday:

### THE STATEMENT

"I have decided to seek an early opportunity to resign my seat. This is entirely my own decision. I have been put under no pressure from anyone else to do this."

It is taken to protect my family, especially my two sensitive children, and also my friends, including Anna Cox and her family, from the intensive and continued tabloid intrusion into our private lives which otherwise seems set to continue indefinitely, and from further character assassinations."

I have informed my agent and Conservative Association chairman but have not yet had the opportunity to dis-

miss the matter at length with them or with others in the association."

But rather than wait for planned meetings, I hope that my quick decision will reduce damage to the local association. I have also informed the Deputy Chief Whip.

Both Helen and I are deeply grateful for the continued support, understanding and comfort we have received and the loyalty shown by those who know us well. I have always tried to work as effectively as possible for all my constituents."

I would like to thank all those who have supported and helped me in Becken-

ham where my family and I have been very happy until recently."

I have always believed there should be a clear line between a person's private life and their work, whatever its nature."

So it is a strange irony that I have become far better known through this than I ever would have become from the work I have consistently put in for my constituents."

The claims that I have created the media coverage in order to generate publicity for the forthcoming book is absurd and without foundation as is so much of what has been printed."

Piers Merchant will be making no further comment."

## Portillo heads contenders for the vacant seat

### BIG GUNS

MICHAEL PORTILLO last night headed a list of former MPs and ministers being mentioned as possible applicants for the Beckenham constituency following Piers Merchant's decision to resign his seat.

Tory officials in the Kent constituency were bracing themselves for a flood of applications from ex-MPs who were defeated in May and are looking for a return route to Parliament. However, a local and as yet unknown contender is equally likely to be selected for the seat.

The constituency, where Mr Merchant secured a majority of 4,953 at the General Election despite a 15 per cent swing to Labour, is by present standards a relatively safe seat.

Mr Portillo, the former Defence Secretary who suffered a shocking defeat at Enfield Southgate, is known to be keen to return to the political front line.

Speaking on the BBC Today programme in July, he said: "The way I feel at the moment is that I would like to be an MP again."

"I don't think the opportunity will come soon and it's always possible that my mind will change, but my present feeling is that if someone felt inclined to elect me... that I would wish to be an MP."

Mr Portillo was last night unavailable for comment but close friends said he was likely to think it too early for him to return to Westminster after suffering such a humiliating defeat.

Tory officials refused to be drawn on who might try for the seat and insisted that it was entirely a matter for the Beckenham Tory Association. "They have complete

responsibility for selecting a candidate, no doubt they will want to move on that soon," a spokesman said. "I'm sure they will pick a first-rate candidate."

Other heavyweight former ministers who lost their seats and could be tempted to try again include Sir Malcolm Rifkind, Michael Forsyth, and William Waldegrave.

Chris Patten, the former Hong Kong Governor and one-time Tory chairman, is thought unlikely to stand.

Most junior former Tory ministers who were defeated in May said that it was too early to say whether they would try for the seat. Jonathan Evans, the former Welsh Minister who lost his Brecon and Radnor seat, did not rule out an application. "It's far too early for me to think about really," he said.

Mr Evans has made no secret of his desire to return the Commons at some stage, but he is about to take up a post in the City.



Portillo: he would like a return to front lines

## Arcane rules date back to 17th century

BY JAMES LANDALE  
POLITICAL REPORTER

### HOW MPs RESIGN

BY A quirk of constitutional history, the precise timing of Piers Merchant's resignation is in the hands of Gordon Brown.

Only when the Chancellor of the Exchequer signs a warrant giving Mr Merchant a new job will the Tory MP's career in Parliament formally come to an end. That job will be an "office of profit under the Crown" known as the Crown Steward and Bailiff of the Manor of Northstead.

Although this sinecure is unpaid, involves no responsibilities and exists only in law, it will automatically disqualify Mr Merchant from being an MP: anyone who is paid by the Crown cannot impartially scrutinise the action of the Crown's Government.

The sinecure used similarly is Crown Steward and Bailiff of the three Chiltern Hundreds of Stoke, Desborough and Burnham. The last person to "apply for the Chiltern

Hundreds" was Neil Kinnock, who stood down as an MP in 1995 to become a European Commissioner. The sinecures are granted alternately.

Mr Merchant has to write to Mr Brown asking for the Manor of Northstead. The Chancellor then signs a witnessed warrant of appointment and a letter is sent to Mr Merchant, notifying the letters MP after his name, informing him of his appointment.

These arcane procedures have to be used because MPs cannot constitutionally resign their seats. This rule, laid down in a Commons resolution in 1623, dates from the time when being an MP was a reluctant duty rather than an eagerly sought honour. Had it been too easy to resign, many MPs would have done so.

The Manor of Northstead consisted of a number of fields and farms in the North Riding of Yorkshire. Much of it is now under a lake.

## The Sunday Mirror was poised to reveal all

Newspaper planned to send a full dossier about the affair to Hague and the constituency, Carol Midgley reports

THE Sunday Mirror was planning to hand over a substantial dossier of "evidence" against Piers Merchant to William Hague and the MP's constituency association if he had continued to protest his innocence.

Bridget Rowe, the editor of the *Sunday Mirror*, insisted she had "100 per cent incontrovertible proof" — understood to include more photographs — of a sexual relationship between Mr Merchant and his blonde researcher, Anna Cox, 18.

A spokesman for the newspaper hinted that further revelations could follow if Mr Merchant continued to accuse the journalists of fabricating the story. "We will contest any lies he continues to tell," he said. "If we need to break the lies, we will."

In a statement, the paper said: "The *Sunday Mirror's* investigation has produced incontrovertible proof that Miss Cox and Mr Merchant are enjoying a full sexual relationship and that their affair resumed only weeks after his original denial."

"In his statement of resignation,

### THE PRESS

Mr Merchant talks of "character assassination" by the tabloid press and complains of "intensive and confirmed intrusion" into his private life. It was the web of deceit and lies spun by him that trapped him and attracted the necessary and quite proper attentions of the British press.

"He said earlier that he had always believed that there should be a clear line between a person's private life and his work. The *Sunday Mirror* agrees: what people get up to in their bedrooms — or those of their lovers — is a matter for them. But if anyone criss-crossed that line with suicidal abandon it was Piers Merchant."

Mr Merchant claims he is researching a book about the excesses of tabloid journalism and that Miss Cox was helping him. A team of journalists and photographers compiled the alleged dossier over the

week of the Tory Party conference in Blackpool. Insiders say only "a fraction" of the material has been used and there were plans to send copies to the Beckenham Conservatives and Mr Hague.

Merchant was still berating the tabloid press as he walked the political plank and resigned his Beckenham seat yesterday. But the man who complained of the newspapers' "intensive and confirmed" invasion of his privacy has yet to make a complaint to the Press Complaints Commission or take legal action against the *Sunday Mirror* which splashed the allegations across six pages last weekend.

Ms Rowe is a member of the PCC's code of practice committee. She insisted she had adhered strictly to the rules while photographing him and investigating the story which was in the public interest and designed to expose his hypocrisy. "We have to remember that Piers Merchant is an MP who two years ago warned the Tories



Bridget Rowe: had "100 per cent" proof

they must be whiter-than-white and he has spectacularly failed to take his own advice," she told Radio 4's Today programme.

The fact that Mr Merchant spent five hours at the Tory party conference last week and the rest of the time partying with his mistress is quite extraordinary, particularly when his leader needs all the support he can get."

She said the issue of privacy was a "very different subject" to the one surrounding the harassment of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Allegations of the affair emerged in March when The Sun said he and Miss Cox were having a relationship. Photographs showed the MP and Miss Cox kissing, walking arm-in-arm, and leaving his London flat together.

Mr Merchant's wife Helen with whom he has two children, stood by him then as he told party members in his Beckenham constituency: "I am whiter than white."

The former journalist, who was a news editor for The Journal newspaper in Newcastle, said Miss Cox was a party worker and theirs was just an innocent friendship. But Miss Cox claimed in a newspaper story that she tied him to the bed with her stockings while they made love.

Despite calls for him to step down, Mr Merchant was backed by his wife in a very public display of support, and went on to keep his seat in Parliament. She also stood by him this week when it emerged that Miss Cox had moved into the family's home.

(And, come to that, stopped.)

ThrustSSC's hydraulic systems. And that Dunlop Aviation engineered the solid aluminium wheels capable of withstanding radial acceleration forces of up to 35,000G, as well as — last, but by positively, absolutely no means least — the brakes.

**BTR**



# Thrust team marks its place in history

FIFTY years to the day after the sound barrier was first broken in the air, Andy Green and the Thrust SSC team awoke yesterday elated at having achieved the same feat on land.

Monday's historic pair of supersonic runs across the Black Rock Desert at an average speed of 762mph were not followed by riotous celebrations. Before flying home to Britain the team is aiming to repeat its achievement under the strict conditions required for an official world record.

Asked how they would be spending the evening, Squadron Leader Green replied briskly: "We'll be working hard." The record eluded him when a double parachute failure caused by fire damage from his two afterburners let the Thrust SSC car roll more than a mile beyond its planned stopping point after his dramatic Mach 1.007 run.

Working against the clock, the recovery crew spent 20 minutes towing the twin-engine car back to the start line.



The British team has broken the sound barrier on land. Now it must try again to make it official, Giles Whittell writes

Five more minutes were lost waiting for overheated on-board computers to cool down. Thrust SSC entered the measured mile on its second supersonic dash just 50 seconds outside the hour allowed by international rules.

"So near and yet so far," Richard Noble, the team's leader, repeated after being told by United States Auto Club timers that the next run, at 760 mph, could not count towards an official record.

Disappointed at first, Mr Noble's attitude changed as the magnitude of his accomplishment sank in. "Unbelievable — we did it," he told his team at a late-afternoon press conference. Turning to reporters, he said: "We've worked very hard for a long, long time to achieve this. It's important

to understand that a world first is a hell of a lot better than a world record." A cheer went up when Adam Northcott-Wright, the operations manager, said: "You can remake records, you can't remake history."

Squadron Leader Green's place in history had indeed been assured three hours earlier. At 2.05pm Pacific time, hurtling from north to south over a 1.5-mile white gypsum line painted on the desert, he accelerated with eerie smoothness through the sound barrier and into automotive legend. From the media's watching area, half a mile west of the track, the ten-tonne black car seemed to approach in total silence, leaving the roar of its engines far behind as it added 100mph of speed every five

seconds. Journalists heard a soft but distinct double popping sound at the entrance to the measured mile.

Paul Grover, a British photographer positioned over the track in an ultra-light aircraft, heard something else. "It was two large cracks, like machine gunfire," he said. The Thrust recovery crew at the end of the track also heard a much louder double bang than observers at the side, even on Squadron Leader Green's first run at Mach 0.997 or 749mph.

"The crew were jumping up and down because they'd heard the sonic boom before I got there," Squadron Leader Green said. "It's a tremendous day," he went on. "The five years of effort put in by this team and our 230 sponsors and so many people of Nevada all came together today."

The team plans two more supersonic runs within an hour to take the record. This could be today, but with new computer data to be analysed and extra fireproofing to be done on the parachutes, delays seemed likely.



Richard Noble, the Thrust team leader, and his wife, Sally, celebrate as the car breaks the sound barrier

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## Japanese win the race to produce eco-friendly car

FROM ROBERT WHYMAN IN TOKYO

THE Toyota Motor group yesterday emerged as the outright winner in the race to mass-produce and market a hybrid car, which combines a petrol engine and an electric motor in a complex system that sharply reduces fuel consumption and poisonous emissions.

Introducing the four-seater Prius, Toyota said its technology would cut fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions to half the levels of comparable petrol-powered vehicles. Emissions of nitrogen oxide and carbon monoxide will be cut to one tenth those of a conventional 1.5-litre petrol engine, said officials of Japan's biggest car maker. Under test conditions, the Prius yielded as much as 66 miles to a gallon.

While other Japanese and foreign car makers, including Detroit's Big Three — Ford, Chrysler and General Motors — have hybrid cars in the works, Toyota will become the only one to put the product on the market. The Prius will be only available in Japan, with a price tag of 2.15 million yen (£1,140).

The hybrid, which goes on sale on December 10, runs on electricity when it starts, and also while running at low

speeds of under 12mph when the petrol engine is less efficient. When the car picks up speed, it runs on both petrol and electricity. The engine and brakes keep it recharged, eliminating the main drawback of electric cars: a short battery life.

Toyota officials said the complex technology makes the car expensive to produce. Some reports say the showroom price would need to be five million yen for Toyota to cover costs, but these would be few buyers at that price.

"Frankly speaking, it may be pretty difficult to make a profit on this at present," said a senior Toyota official.

Growing public concern about gas emissions has prompted Toyota and rivals such as Honda and Nissan to develop hybrids, in the hope that environmentally friendly cars can give a boost to stagnating domestic sales.

Hiroshi Okuda, the president of Toyota, said recently that the company would commit itself to offering environmentally friendly products, which he said were the key to further growth in the car industry.

Toyota envisages sales of about 1,000 Prius hybrids in the first month.

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Today is the 10th Anniversary of the Great Storm of 1987. The immediate impact of the storm was devastating, with ancient trees and native woodlands felled by the wind.

However, it did help raise awareness about the significant decline of Britain's ancient woodlands, half of which has disappeared since the end of World War II. For the first time, people began to take notice of, and value, trees on a national level.

The Woodland Trust is the largest charity concerned solely with the conservation of the UK's woods and trees. We currently protect 38,000 acres of woodland, which we keep open for the public to enjoy.

Strange though it was, the storm has had many benefits in conservation terms and it caused far less long-term damage to the countryside than some of the threats that woodland faces every day, such as neglect, vandalism, dumping and development.

So don't sit back and wait for the next Great Storm to bring trees back into your thoughts. We need you to help us protect the ancient trees and woodland of Britain now, and secure this unrivalled national heritage for many generations to come.

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# Fighting spreads to oil-rich enclave as Angola joins Congo's civil war



By SAM KILEY  
AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

ANGOLAN troops have joined Congolese rebels and opened a second front against government forces in the oil-rich south of Congo-Brazzaville.

Diplomats said about 1,000 Angolan government troops had crossed from the enclave of Cabinda into Congo, where President Lissouba is facing a challenge from Denis Sassou Nguesso, a former President.

Intelligence sources yesterday gave a warning that Rwanda may also be drawn into the conflict, which has claimed at least 5,000 lives

over the past two months, as neighbouring states set out to settle long-standing scores.

Angola's retaliation against Congo followed reports that President Lissouba had hired mercenaries from Angola's rebel Unita movement to fight General Nguesso's Cobra militia.

Angola's enclave of Cabinda is wedged between Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly Zaire. The enclave is rich in oil, on which Angola depends to prop up its war-shattered economy.

According to diplomats, Congolese troops counter-attacked Angolan forces yesterday and were

fighting for control of Miconje in the north of Cabinda. Congolese warplanes flew over the Takula region in the enclave.

Soon afterwards, a MiG fighter-bomber, thought to be from Angola, bombed the pro-government southern sector of Brazzaville, the Congo's capital. Twenty civilians were reported to have been killed.

A gendarme at the French Embassy was wounded by shelling during a ground assault on the presidential palace. General Nguesso's Cobra militia claimed yesterday to have taken the palace and the airport.

While Angola's rebels have joined forces with the Congo's Govern-

ment, and Congolese rebels have allied themselves with the Angolan administration in the battle for control of some of Africa's biggest oil reserves, the conflict threatens to draw in other old enemies as well.

At least 4,500 Hutu soldier-refugees from Rwanda are based in a camp on the Congo river, posing a threat to the Rwandan Tutsi soldiers who installed President Kabila in power in Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Intelligence sources said yesterday that if the Hutu soldiers joined either side in the conflict across the river, Tutsi soldiers were certain to attack them from Kinshasa. Mr Kabila last

week sent an "observer" force of several hundred commandos into Brazzaville to investigate who had been firing shells into Kinshasa. His senior officers suspect that Hutu extremists backed by soldiers loyal to Mobutu Sese Seko, Zaire's late President, are using the conflict in Brazzaville as a cover for attacks on Kinshasa.

This may drag Rwanda's Tutsi soldiers into fighting far from home. Last week Major-General Paul Kagame, Rwanda's Vice-President, said after a visit to Kinshasa that he did not rule out combined military operations with Mr Kabila "if the need should arise".

## Massacre takes Algeria's death toll to 75,000

A BRUTAL weekend massacre of more than 50 civilians by Islamic militants in Algeria has brought to 75,000 the latest Arab diplomatic estimates of the death toll since the civil war for control of the largest North African country broke out nearly six years ago.

The rising toll compares with the 250,000 Algerians killed in what young Islamic fighters now refer to as the "first war of liberation", that waged against French colonial rule between 1954 and 1962.

According to Algerian newspapers, most of the latest victims were women and men under 30 who had had their throats cut and bodies mutilated in a two-hour frenzy of murder suspected to have been the work of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA).

Gruesome methods now used to butcher victims include the murder and incineration of children, the severing of heads and the mutilation of body parts. The militants' goal is to create an Iranian-style theocratic state whose influence could then spread throughout the Arab world and to Europe only 300 miles away.

"It is genocide. There is no other word," said Djamel Benrabeh, co-leader of an organisation called Our Algeria, which struggles to help victims. It is the "pure and simple extermination of a defenceless civilian population".

**Axes, hoes and  
DIY guillotines  
in rebel armoury,  
Christopher  
Walker reports**

"Terrorism is in no way vanquished," said the general who is in charge of a continuing operation designed to dislodge the GIA from its stronghold in Ouled Allet, just south of Algiers. Until his remarks were published, the Government had attempted to cover up the extent of the bloodshed by referring euphemistically to some "residual terrorism".

In fact, the war may be approaching a new spiral of violence as competing Islamic groups strive to increase disruption in advance of municipal elections on October 23. The battle is designed to restore elected officials to the country's 1,500 town halls and 48 provincial authorities for the first time in seven years.

The elections are an attempt by the Government to promote a sense of normality and rare visas have been promised to international news organisations usually barred. The move was met with a call for a boycott by a group of exiled leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), who claimed it would be useless.

Algeria: A judge was shot dead by unidentified men in the town of Ain-Berber in eastern Algeria as he left for work, the *Liberia* and *El-Khabar* dailies said. More than 20 judges have been killed by Islamic extremists since 1992. (AFP)

The massacre followed a recent pattern, with the victims being lured to their deaths when their bus was stopped at a phoney roadblock. The ambush took place soon after a senior Algerian general had made the rare admission that Islamic insur-



Sudanese Army soldiers captured by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army wait at a makeshift prison compound at Yei, southern Sudan

## Conflicts claim 18 million lives since 1945

By MICHAEL EVANS  
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

NEARLY 18 million people were killed in wars and other armed conflicts between the end of the Second World War in 1945 and 1994, according to a study by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

The statistics, in the institute's latest edition of *The Military Balance*, show that East Asia, Central and South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa account for more than 15 million of the fatalities. There

are "active" conflicts in countries such as Colombia, Algeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Sudan.

John Chipman, the institute's director, said: "The map of the world's armed conflicts is a grim reminder... of the number taking place, many without any prospect of effective mediation or decisive intervention."

The study showed that 10,371,000 people died in East Asia, including two million in the Vietnam War, three million in Korea, and one million

from the Pol Pot massacres in Cambodia. The toll from other regions include 2,857,000 in Central and South Asia, 2,685,000 in sub-Saharan Africa, 447,000 in Latin America, 186,000 in Europe, 108,000 in North Africa and 972,000 in the Middle East.

The Institute has also included less obvious violent deaths, such as 1,000 killed by army suppression in South Korea in 1980 and one million government executions in China from 1950-51.

In recent years, the worst peace record has been on the

African continent. In Algeria 50,000 have died since 1992. Since 1991, 350,000 people have been killed in the Somali Republic, 30,000 in Sierra Leone since 1991, 150,000 in Liberia from 1989 to 1996, and 50,000 in Mozambique from 1976 to 1995. About 500,000 people died in the 1963-1972 civil war in Sudan. Today, there is still a civil war in southern Sudan, although there are hopes of an end to the conflict after the Government accepted a framework for peace in July which opened the way for negotiations with

the rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Army.

The report said that the Middle East and North Africa remained the largest arms market in the world, with deliveries of "major conventional weapons systems" at a high level in 1996 and 1997 as a result of orders made three or four years ago.

The greatest importer of defence equipment in 1996 was Saudi Arabia, with nearly \$9 billion (£5.6 billion), which was almost three times more than Egypt, the second largest importer.

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## Clinton presses Brazil on trade dream

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

PRESIDENT Clinton and President Cardoso of Brazil held several hours of talks yesterday in an attempt to iron out differences over Mr Clinton's dream for a hemispheric trade pact from Alaska to Patagonia by 2005.

During his three-day stay in Brazil, Mr Clinton and Madeleine Albright, his Secretary of State, will sign bilateral agreements on space projects, education, technological interchange, environmental issues and the war on the drugs trade.

But it appears that Mr Clinton's main aim is to overcome Brazilian objections to his trade bloc plan. There has been strong political and public opposition in Brazil to giving in too eagerly to American demands.

Backing from South America's biggest and strongest economy would make it easier for Mr Clinton to convince the US Congress to grant him the "fast-track" authority he needs to negotiate commercial agreements in the region.

Mr Clinton's eagerness to create a trade bloc in the Americas reflects growing fears in the United States that it will lose influence over emerging South American markets, whose trade with the European Union has grown in recent years. But he faces strong opposition from a Congress backing the interests of US farmers and industry, who fear a flood of cheap goods.

Senior Cardoso, who has expressed caution about rushing into a commercial pact, said during the Brasília talks that the free trade zone was an "ambitious project shared by both countries. But there remain differences over its creation".

## Optimism over euro receives twin boost

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

CONFIDENCE in a smooth launch for the European single currency hardened yesterday when France and Germany cleared the way for a new body to co-ordinate policy in the future euro zone and a Brussels forecast showed that all states except Greece were on track to qualify for the currency.

Theo Waigel and Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the German and French Finance Ministers, pitched up a long-standing Franco-German quarrel on political supervision of the euro, agreeing to the shape of an "informal" council that would monitor economic, budget, foreign exchange and other issues.

Germany insisted that the arrangement, which is likely to win full EU approval next month, would not impinge on the authority of the future European Central Bank or the business of Ecofin, the EU's law-making economic and financial council.

However, with the prospect that 11 of the 15 EU states will qualify for the euro next spring, the deal raises the likelihood of a new EU power centre. Britain, which is expected to stay out of the single currency, would be excluded from this "euro council", along with Greece, Sweden and Denmark.

Herr Waigel depicted the new forum, to be called the "EX", with the X standing for the number of euro countries, as an EU parallel to the G7, the forum of the world's main industrialised nations. He delivered an implicit warning to Britain on Monday when he urged the Government to sign up to the euro.

The European Commission yesterday rubbed in the likely isolation of the non-euro states when Yves Thibault de Silguy, the monetary commissioner, withdrew earlier reservations

over the proposed council. The issue had raised concern when it had seemed that only a handful of states would qualify for membership, but now it was clear a majority would be there, he said.

New evidence came with the Commission's forecasts showing that stronger-than-expected growth and tight budgets across the EU mean that 14 out of the 15 are likely to be deemed to have met the criteria laid down in the 1992 Maastricht treaty. The future euro states are to be chosen at a summit under British chairmanship next May, eight months ahead of the launch.

Although the Commission's forecasts are judged by many non-EU experts to err on the optimistic side, they will be used by British euro supporters who argue that sterling's absence from a broad euro zone could weaken the economy and undermine British influence in the EU.

Britain emerges as one of the best performers in the forecasts, joining Luxembourg and Finland as the only states expected to pass a strict reading of all the main criteria. However, the Commission reduced its earlier estimates of British growth, saying it could only expect a 2.1 per cent rise in gross domestic product next year, compared with an EU average of 3.0 per cent.

All except France and Greece are due to scrape under the key deficit ceiling of 3 per cent of GDP this year. At a forecast 3.1 per cent, France "should not present any concerns," M de Silguy said.

Resolution of Italy's government crisis was greeted yesterday by Jacques Santer, the Commission President, as evidence that Rome would keep up the austerity drive that has brought it within reach of the euro.

Leading article, page 21



USS Nimitz cruising in the Gulf after being rushed to the region at the weekend

## US force brings 'no-fly' calm

Washington: The commander of the US aircraft carrier battle group that rushed to the Gulf after Iran launched naval manoeuvres in the waterway said yesterday that the "no-fly zone" had been calm

since their arrival. "We've seen the activity in the no-fly zone actually calm down in the past couple of days, which is, I think, significant because of our presence here and the great deal of work that's already been done by the US Air Force in this part of the world in enforcing the no-fly zone," Rear Admiral John Nathman said in an interview with Cable News Network.

Admiral Nathman said dealings between the US battle group and the Iranian Navy had been "professional and courteous", but the US fleet was being cautious about Iranian activity. The US aircraft carrier battle group led by the Nimitz arrived in the Gulf on Sunday, one day after

Iran began naval exercises in the region.

The Nimitz, which can carry 50 fighters, and six US warships entered the region about two weeks ahead of schedule after Iranian warplanes blasted two Iranian rebel bases in southern Iraq on September 28, violating the no-fly zone enforced by Western allies. On Saturday, the Iranian Navy started exercises that involved two Russian-built submarines and nearly 50 ships.

Rear Admiral Nathman did not say how long the force would stay, but he believed the US presence forced Iran and Iraq to "get the message" about US enforcement of the no-fly zone. (Reuters)

## WORLD SUMMARY

### Town's hotels treat Papon as pariah

Paris: Hotels in Bordeaux closed their doors to Maurice Papon, the former civil servant accused of sending hundreds of Jews to their death in the Second World War (Ben Macintyre writes).

Last Friday Bordeaux's court ruled that the ailing 83-year-old should be released from prison for the rest of his trial, but he has become a pariah, forced to move from hotel to hotel. One asked him to go after demonstrators rallied outside shouting "Death to Papon!" and "Throw him in jail!". Hotel switchboards have been bombarded by callers denouncing him and accusing staff of being collaborators. The health of M Papon, who was allowed to leave Grignas prison near Bordeaux because of fears he might die, has apparently improved.

### Nevis opts to break away

Roaring against its stronger partner in an unpopular federation, a Caribbean "mouse", yesterday declared itself a new independent state (Michael Binyon writes). With only 9900 inhabitants, Nevis would be one of the world's smallest states if it secedes from St Kitts. The five legislators of an island that was once a favourite haunt of drug smugglers and Diana, Princess of Wales, voted unanimously to leave the twin-island federation of which Nevis has been a part since gaining independence from Britain in 1983. Their decision must be ratified by two thirds of the voters.

### Russian MPs head for revolt

Moscow: Russia's opposition-dominated parliament and the Government were headed for a potentially explosive showdown, which could plunge the country into fresh elections (Richard Bessant writes). After days of threats and counter-threats, desperate negotiations were under way at the Duma, the lower house, to head off a no-confidence vote in the Government of Viktor Chernomyrdin scheduled for today. Last week the Duma rejected the 1998 budget and rounded on the Government for its failure to improve the lot of millions of poor Russians.

### Beggar's bid fools auction

Hong Kong: The government's biggest land sale was thrown into confusion yesterday when a penniless woman, right, made a winning bid of almost HK\$900 million (more than £70 million) for a plot (Jonathan Mirsky writes). The bogus bidder was identified as someone who stands outside Legislative Council meetings, shrieking at members. She was taken away in an ambulance and the largest site in Hong Kong's history to be sold, 980,000 sq ft in Tai Po, went for £448 million.

### Deal allows Prodi to stay

Rome: Italy's 18-month-old centre-left Government sailed an agreement with its hardline Communist parliamentary allies allowing it to stay in power for a year and carry through a budget to help Italy to meet the criteria for the European single currency (Richard Owen writes). Romano Prodi, the Prime Minister, had tendered his resignation to President Scalfaro last Thursday after Communist Reformists withdrew support in the budget debate. A vote of confidence confirming Signor Prodi in office is expected tomorrow.

### Botha apology on apartheid

Johannesburg: R.F. "Fik" Botha, left, South Africa's former Foreign Minister, has apologised for failing to turn the tide of apartheid and to investigate the killing and torturing of political opponents by the security forces. Mr Botha denied he had authorised political murders and told the Truth and Reconciliation Commission he had recognised apartheid as immoral since the early 1970s. He said a 1986 Commonwealth mission nearly brokered an end to apartheid. (Reuters)

### Bomber 'wanted to kill Jews'

Cairo: The man who masterminded the fire-bombing of a tour bus in central Cairo last month which left nine German holidaymakers dead said at the start of his trial yesterday that he had wanted to kill Jews. Saher Abu al-Ela said he did not prevent the attack when he discovered his victims were German tourists because "infidels are all the same". (AFP)



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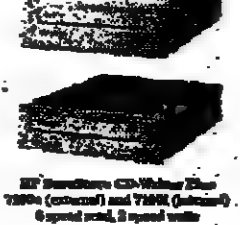
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# Italy angered by British 'defence of hooliganism'

Blair will lead plan to defeat Cup thugs

By Nicholas Wood

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

WHAT started as a low-key diplomatic spat between Italy and Britain over the policing of last Saturday's World Cup qualifying match turned into a heated war of words yesterday. Lamberto Dini, the Foreign Minister, declared that British criticisms of Italian police behaviour from Tony Blair downwards were "absolutely incomprehensible".

The view in London, putting the blame on our forces of law and order, seems to me quite extraordinary," Signor Dini said. "It was not our police who created the disorder, it was the England fans. They smashed up the city centre before the match and poured back on to the streets after it."

"Quite apart from what happened inside the stadium, we have to take into account the fact that even before the game started there had been a number of incidents involving British citizens," he said. "Numerous British fans committed acts of vandalism in the centre of Rome. They damaged cars, they threw stones through shop windows, and started brawls in the heart of our capital." He said he did not know if the fans involved were drunk, but in a sense I hope they were, because if they were not their aggressive behaviour becomes even more reprehensible.

Italian officials had been slow to react to British charges that police behaved violently.

The prevailing view is that the police bravely contained aggressive thugs fuelled by alcohol. "We have a government crisis on our hands, we have other things to worry about," one official said testily on Monday, when hard questions about Italian behaviour were being asked in London. "There was a match, there was hooliganism, and our police dealt with it."

Italians are still haunted by the tragedy of the Liverpool-Juventus match at the Heysel stadium in 1985, when 39 fans died, most of them Italian. "Mr Blair may be young, but even he must know that what happened in Rome has its roots in history," *La Stampa* said. "There was a desire on Saturday to suppress trouble quickly to avoid a wider tragedy. Maintaining public order is not an exact science."

Few Italian reports suggested that peaceable middle-class spectators had been roughed up as well as hooligans. Police said well-behaved British fans had been kept inside the stadium after the match while the Italian fans were let out "in order to control the situation".

"It was all entirely predictable," *La Stampa* said. "It was predictable that large numbers of English hooligans would run riot in Rome. Yet no one did anything to prevent it. That is not the fault of our police: the British authorities, if they are so good at maintaining public order, must have known that flights from Rome were being boarded by well-known hard-core thugs, and should have stopped them. Since they did not, our police were right to use an iron fist to protect our streets. Hooliganism is not an Italian problem, it is a British problem."

The Italian media focused on injuries suffered by Alberto Mu, a 24-year-old married man from Ostia, who was set upon by hooligans when crossing Via Cavour in the centre of Rome before the match to buy cigarettes. He lost his left eye when they thrust a broken bottle into his face.

"They screamed 'Italy shirt,'" Signor Mu said from his hospital bed. "I said, 'No, Italy win' and made a victory sign. Then everything went black."

Also freed were seven supporters accused of aggravated brawling after a pre-match attack on an elderly man and his son on train. One was Paul Dodd, 26, who has 13 convictions for soccer violence and served 2½ years for a 1988 assault on Scottish fans. Last night he denied responsibility for the train attack but said he had been "treated well in jail".

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TONY BLAIR is to take personal charge of efforts to prevent next year's World Cup finals in France being marred by the kind of crowd violence that disgraced England's match in Italy.

The Prime Minister's Downing Street policy unit is to review ways of stopping potential troublemakers from travelling to the finals, which start in June.

The Government is prepared to take tough action to prevent what ministers regard as a tiny minority of football hooligans from crossing the Channel and tarnishing the reputation of all English fans.

It is understood that the decision to call in the policy unit was taken at a meeting of senior ministers and officials yesterday. One option under review is confiscating the passports of the known troublemakers.

One senior official said: "The Government is not going to allow outsiders to go out there and it will not shrink from taking tough decisions, even taking passports away if it stops a tiny minority giving the Italian police the excuse to knock about the 95 per cent of supporters who are decent and law-abiding."

The creation of a small central unit to supervise the security preparations for the World Cup finals is also on the agenda. Its membership would be drawn from the Foreign Office, the Home Office, the Department of Culture Media and Sport, and the Football Task Force headed by David Mellor.

Also freed were seven supporters accused of aggravated brawling after a pre-match attack on an elderly man and his son on train.

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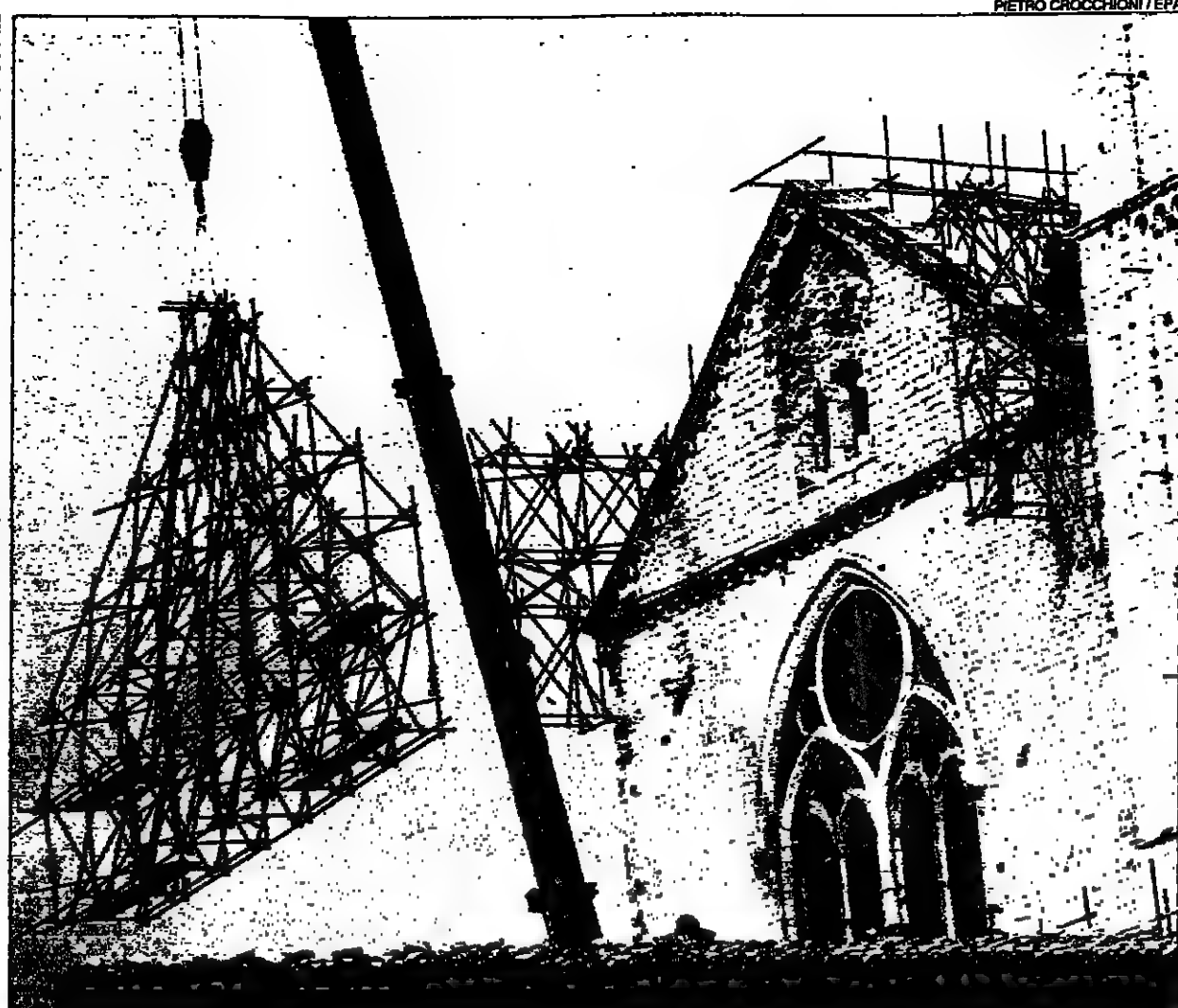
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A crane manoeuvres a metal support structure into place on the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi yesterday

## Assisi engineers use metal cage to shore up damaged basilica

By Richard Owen

IN A daring operation, Italian engineers yesterday successfully placed a purpose-built metal cage over the crumbling tympanum on the roof of the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi, preventing it from crashing down into the great church and destroying medieval frescoes.

Another powerful tremor struck central Italy yesterday afternoon and was felt as far south as Rome. It caused no further damage at Assisi but brought down the clock tower on the medieval town hall at Foligno, a few miles away. The tower had been leaning perilously since the first earthquake nearly three weeks ago, and firemen had spent much of yesterday trying in vain to secure it.

In Assisi, the tympanum, a recessed triangular pediment more than 100ft up on the side of the basilica, was badly damaged in the double earthquake which

struck on September 26. It suffered further damage a week ago when another strong tremor struck Umbria. Officials in charge of the restoration operation feared that the tympanum, which weighs 70 tonnes, would topple through the roof, bringing down frescoes in the already damaged south transepts of both the upper and lower churches.

The works at risk include a series of frescoes by Pietro Lorenzetti, the Sienese painter, and Cimabue's great *Crucifixion* which, although badly faded and blackened, is considered one of the key masterpieces at the dawn of Western art.

"We all held our breath," said Professor Giorgio Croci, the engineer in charge. The three and a half tonne cage, constructed from steel scaffolding poles, was swung by a giant crane and secured to the basilica roof despite high winds. The half-hour operation was conducted in silence, and the relief as the cage fitted gently into

place was palpable. Walter Veltroni, the Minister of Culture, who is visiting the earthquake zone, praised the operation as "very difficult and delicate". He said he was drawing up a report on damage to historic sites in the region, and appealed for a "mobilisation of international aid to help us restore our endangered religious and artistic heritage".

Restoration experts said that, with the Assisi tympanum secured, work could now begin on erecting scaffolding inside the basilica so that the frescoed ceiling, 10 per cent of which has collapsed, can be restored. Workmen will also inject cement into the wall of the transept to strengthen the structure.

But Antonio Paolucci, the former Minister of Culture, who has been put in charge of the basilica restoration, said he could not guarantee that the church could be reopened in time for millennium celebrations.

## England fans 'denied rights' in jail

FROM RICHARD DUCK IN ROME

THE British Embassy in Rome was last night investigating a claim by three British football fans that they were denied their legal rights while held for two nights in a Rome jail on bogus charges in the day after England's World Cup match.

Chris Jackson, 30, a graphic designer, said that he was beaten by police after the three

were arrested outside a city centre bar accused of fighting with police officers. They denied the charges but yesterday pleaded guilty after being told they could be held in custody for weeks before a trial. Under a "fast-track" system, the accused may admit charges against them in return for suspended jail sentences.

Mr Jackson from Brighton, and his boss, Mark Richens, 26, who owns a graphic design business near St Albans, and

their colleague Paul Walker, 24, of Colwyn Bay, looked shaken and frightened in court. Mr Jackson urged British journalists to tell the embassy of their plight.

"When I arrived at the prison they refused to take me in because I was so badly beaten," he said. "They took me to hospital then police beat me again after the X-rays. We haven't been able to speak to the embassy and were not allowed to make a personal

call." Also freed were seven supporters accused of aggravated brawling after a pre-match attack on an elderly man and his son on train.

One was Paul Dodd, 26, who has 13 convictions for soccer violence and served 2½ years for a 1988 assault on Scottish fans. Last night he denied responsibility for the train attack but said he had been "treated well in jail".

He had watched the match on television in his cell.

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# From Streatham to Dior

John Galiano, the former wild-child designer, has been transformed into the svelte head of a Paris couture house. Grace Bradberry reports

At a cursory glance, he could have been just another of "the suits", those anonymous, but powerful, management figures who quietly take their seats at the catwalk shows of Christian Dior.

The sleek bob was just a little too short, however, and the immaculately cut dark suit just a little too Salvador Dali. This was John Galiano, the former wild-child designer, now shorn of his dreadlocks and transformed into the svelte head of a Paris couture house.

At one time he would have been surrounded by his models. Instead, he sat quietly behind the scenery in the Carrousel du Louvre, chatting to two of his staff.

Yesterday, as the luminaries of the fashion world sat on their little gilt chairs, arranged around a series of bourgeois tableaux — a grand piano, a rose-filled bath, a snooker table — they may have wondered if this was to be vintage Galiano. They may have asked themselves if it was to be that much celebrated thing, "a fashion moment". No one, however, will have questioned that Galiano should be there at all, the head of France's grandest design house — the first Briton to achieve such eminence in this century.

Indeed, it now seems an inevitability that this 37-year-old son of a Streatham plumber, who will show his own-label collection tomorrow, should have ascended the glassy pyramid of Paris couture. Yet if Galiano's rise is the stuff of fashion students' fairytales, it certainly contains several passages straight from the pen of the Brothers Grimm. It is a tale of rags, to more rags, to yet more rags, before, finally, riches.

Juan Carlos Antonio Galiano was born in Gibraltar in 1960. When he was six, the family moved to South London. His father, Gibraltar-born Juan Carlos, taught him to hold a blowtorch: his mother, Spanish-born Anita, taught him flamenco on the kitchen table, and dressed him in extravagant fancy-dress.

After five unhappy years at grammar school where he was bullied, he went to City and East London College to study design and printed textiles, then on to study fashion design at St Martin's, where he was a star not only of the workrooms, but also of the Sobo clubs that were the social centre of college life. To supplement his income, he worked as a dresser at the National Theatre, which helped to develop his innate theatricality.

Galiano is now seen as more of a creative than a

commercial designer. Yet as a student he spent hours in the V&A searching not only for historical inspiration but also for the key to bias-cutting. He also did a work placement with the London tailor Tommy Nutter. His former tutor Sheridan Barnett remembers him as a workaholic and it was sheer grind, coupled with technical accomplishment, that made his graduation collection, Les Incroyables, such a triumph.

It was a fantastical collection, inspired by French revolutionary costumes, and included inside-out jackets and trailing buttons that in



Galiano's spring collection

less accomplished hands might have appeared like incompetence. They sold out, with Diana Ross among the buyers. Galiano was just 23.

Les Incroyables was followed by a second collection, Afghanistan, which was a disaster. Galiano's third collection, however, did find two key people — a muse and a backer.

The muse was Amanda Grieve (now Lady Amanda Harlech). She was to remain a collaborator right up until Galiano joined Dior last year, but his backers were to come and go more rapidly. The first, Johan Brun, financed the first three commercial collections, beginning with The Ludic Game, upside-down, inside-out clothes that could be worn by men and women. This was followed by Fallen Angels, remembered not only for the clothes but also the styling. The models' foreheads were stamped with his logo, and as

they were stepping out he drenched them with water so the white muslin dresses clung to them.

While audiences lapped up the fantasy, however, Galiano was embroiled in the reality of being broke. By July 1986, Brun had dropped out, and Galiano turned to the Danish tycoon Peder Bertelsen. In an effort to be commercial he started a younger line called Galiano's Girl.

Critically, he was highly acclaimed, winning the title of British Designer of the Year in 1987, but his clothes were not making money. In 1989 the relationship came to an end.

It is from this period that Galiano's reputation for self-destructive hedonism springs and he hit the club scene with a vengeance. By the late Eighties, his lifestyle was becoming increasingly hedonistic, as he sought to escape his frustration at his lack of commercial success.

Unable to see any way forward in London, Galiano telephoned Faycal Amor, the designer-owner of the French label Plein Sud, who said: "Come to Paris." Again, critical acclaim didn't bring commercial stability: the link with Amor was broken soon afterwards.

He missed one season, and drifted along with no backer until, four weeks before the next collections, he was invited to dinner with Anna Wintour, the Editor of American Vogue. Appalled by Galiano's situation — he could not even afford the price of a Metro ticket — she allowed André Leon Talley, then the magazine's creative director, to help Galiano, partly from the Condé Nast coffers.

Talley, a flamboyant, charismatic figure, had first come across Galiano in the Eighties. "He went around town with Jasper Conran and they dressed like Russian aristocratic children before the Revolution. They were outstanding. It was a vision."

By 1993, Galiano was at a lower ebb. "He was about to go under," says Talley. "He was left in Paris stranded, didn't have a place to live, he had no money to eat and we kept him going. It's one of the most important things I've done in my life." Sometimes Talley would go to McDonald's and buy 30 hamburgers and milkshakes to keep Galiano and his team going.

He also took Galiano to meet São Schlumberger, a Portuguese socialite who was to become his first couture customer. She was struck by his attitude and his educated conversation. Talley, knowing that Schlumberger was in possession of an empty Paris mansion, the Hotel Particu-



John Galiano's self-destructive hedonism has been curtailed by critical acclaim and commercial success: his autumn-winter collection for Dior

lier, asked if Galiano could show there and she agreed.

Wintour then flew Galiano to New York and, with just three weeks to go, John Buit, chairman of the American investment bank, Paine Webber International, agreed to bankroll him. The fashion pack, clutching invitations in the form of rusty keys, were treated to just 17 black outfits, worn by 17 of the most beautiful women in the world, giving their services free.

Within weeks of the show at the Hotel Particulier, Galiano had found his own atelier in a cobbled street in the Bastille area and his full-time staff grew to seven.

His reputation continued to grow. The next collection in-

cluded clothes inspired by Christian Dior. Then, in March 1995 came the Winter Wonderland show. The clothes were technically brilliant but utterly unsuited to mass production. In short, it was a couture show.

In fact, by this stage Galiano's appointment as successor to Hubert de Givenchy was virtually a certainty. For more than a year before Givenchy's retirement in 1995, Galiano had been in secret negotiations with Bernard Arnault, head of the luxury conglomerate LVMH, who was determined to find a young, publicity-generating talent to revitalise the house.

Galiano's appointment came as a considerable shock

to the Paris fashion world. Not since Charles Frederick Worth founded his couture house in Paris in 1857 had a Brit had such influence in the upper echelons of fashion.

The appointment was announced after de Givenchy's final show in July 1995. Not everyone thought it was wise. Valentino suggested that Galiano did not know "everything about how to make a dress". Versace said: "John is a genius — but he needs some control."

He moved into the Givenchy studio on November 24 with just 18 working days to put together his first haute couture collection. On his first day, he

astonished staff by eating in the canteen. "Lentils and fish — and 60 pairs of eyes on me!" They were still more startled when he sent back garments six or seven times with the injunction: "Smaller! Tighter!"

The first show in January last year was a triumph, including extravagant tulle ballgowns, orange Indian silks burnished with gold, and black wool tuxedo all-in-ones. Tina Turner, seated in the front row, placed an order.

Despite his success, few expected him to move to Dior so soon. But it now appears that the Givenchy job was a dress rehearsal for the grander house and the appointment was announced that October.

This year, on top of his two own label and four Dior collections, he has produced a mid-season range. Such is his workload that even expeditions to nightclubs have to be "unstable" in. Once viewed as self-destructive, the designer no longer drinks and runs three times a week.

If Galiano has grown more professional, then his operations have also become more secretive. Despite his support, André Leon Talley has never been invited behind the scenes — an omission that hurts him. Lady Harlech, described by Galiano as recently as last year as his chief collaborator, found herself excluded from the Dior deal. She now works with Karl Lagerfeld at Chanel.

Galiano's ready-to-wear show in Paris



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## Men under the microscope

ARE men becoming more spiritual? A study at Nottingham University, in collaboration with Roy McCleughy from the Kingdom Trust, is trying to uncover whether the changing role of men has had an impact on their spiritual beliefs.

Professor Roger Murphy, Dean of the Faculty of Education, is leading the university's involvement in the study, called *Hearing Men's Voices*. Thirty interviews, each lasting between one and two hours, have been conducted by two researchers, Kaja Zeisler and Heidi Shewell-Cooper, with men from various backgrounds. Participants were asked to touch on a wide range of issues, including personal relationships.

Although it is too early to draw conclusions, the researchers say, one topic keeps cropping up. Men feel confused about their role in society, how this affects their relationships with women, and how it colours women's expectations of them. Most interviewees had opinions on this subject, and were conscious that women's expectations of men had altered over the generations.

Mr McCleughy, author of *Men and Masculinity: From Power to Love*, a book about the response of men to feminism, says that this shift is becoming more important, influencing men's mental and physical health, their expectations and their chances of employment. "From other work, I can say that, of course, the changing role of women does affect the way men live and see themselves," Mr McCleughy says.

"Now that women have joined the pool of people available for work, which is a good thing, some men have to cope with the prospect of unemployment against the stereotype of men as providers and protectors. This can induce distress and a sense of failure."

In households where both partners have careers, Mr McCleughy says, men have had to take on responsibilities traditionally shouldered by women, such as more active parenting. He says: "Sometimes men feel they have too many roles, and their personal space or sense of spirituality is squashed out."

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# 'I have turned being an outsider into a great asset'

Like sister Tanita, *This Life* star Ramon Tikaram has found fame. But the two do not speak. Interview by Moira Petty

**S**o convincing was Ramon Tikaram as Ferdy, the bisexual with the My Little Pony hairstyle in television's *This Life*, that he was soon knee-deep in offers to play Ferdy clones. Instead he has joined the West End cast of *Jesus Christ Superstar* as Judas.

"I like playing men in crisis, at the end of their nervous sensibility," he says. "The energy required is so outside of what I am in real life." Yet it isn't so far from his own experience, for he adds: "I have a natural affinity with outsiders."

The 31-year-old son of a Fujian father who joined the British Army and a Malaysian mother from the rain-forests of Sarawak, in northwest Borneo, he grew up with an ingrained sense of being different. On the army base, and at his Dover boarding school for sons of military personnel, he suffered racial abuse.

Now, he says, it is useful to summon up those latent feelings of not being one of the pack. Both Judas, through his treachery, and Ferdy, because of his class and occupation (dispatch rider), stand apart from their communities. "I've turned being an outsider on its head," he says. "It's now a great asset."

*This Life*, an everyday tale of middle-class lawyers, was the surprise hit of the year. But while the cast became stars almost overnight, the BBC dithered, failing to renew contracts for a third series option when the deadline passed four months ago.

Inevitably, you think a bit of Ferdy might have rubbed off on him. You expect to be on the receiving end of one of Ferdy's scowls, or in the flightpath of a strand of waist-length hair being tossed over his shoulder. But the black cascade stays as firmly in check as his ego. He is better educated and better tempered than Ferdy and so laid-back that it takes several emissaries from the theatre, where he is due for rehearsals, to lure him away from his orange juice and cigarettes.

Nor is he the slightest bit interested in flame-haired handymen. He is thoroughly heterosexual and mentions his two young children early on to

emphasise the point. His five-year-old daughter, Isalei (Fiji-an for My Island), and three-year-old son, Kisi (Kiss Me), are "the constants" in his life, despite the break-up of his marriage to Vanessa Lee, a theatre director, more than two years ago.

The separation was initially marked by "hostilities" but has thawed to the point where they can take the children shopping together. There has been no such repatriation of the rift with his sister, and only sibling, the singer/songwriter Tanita Tikaram. She found fame soon after leaving school and now, at 28, is recording her seventh album in Los Angeles.

They were very close as children, but her brother says: "We haven't spoken for three years. It began with a disagreement about life-styles, which are so inextricably linked to what we are. Our interests are similar [he fronts a Latin jazz band, writes all her own songs, paints incredibly], he acknowledges. "I knew she was up to something after a while but I had no idea what until she turned up on television."

But their relationship seems to have been underpinned by rivalry. Tikaram, basking then in the reflected glory of his own gifts, didn't spot his sister's. "She writes all her own songs, paints incredibly," he acknowledges. "I knew she was up to something after a while but I had no idea what until she turned up on television."

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"Now I think Tanita and I have just got used to the silence between us. Things are going so well for me now, why add the complication of my sister to my life? When everything else is stripped away and we've set out to accomplish what we wanted to achieve, and when I'm more confident about who I am, then I'm sure we'll talk again."

As a boy, he was "sensitive and caring, almost paternal" with Tanita. In his daughter he detects "the same intellectual energy" she had as a child.



First as Ferdy, now as Judas, Ramon Tikaram has summoned up latent feelings of not being one of the pack



Ramon and his sister, the singer Tanita Tikaram

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School lessons + Legal aid + Air heads

## No-hopers in the classroom

TEACHERS enjoy something of the honorary status of women: they are either revered or abominated; hailed as the prime mover in a child's life and simultaneously reviled for their inadequacies. The difficulty is — and this is an argument I've often good-naturedly had with my colleague on *Critical Quarterly*, the brilliant educationist, Bethan Marshall — most teachers are bad teachers. This is not because teachers are a particularly low specimen of nature — though we'll come to that later — but because it is consistently true of all people from all walks of life.

Talent or genuine ability, certainly brilliance, are always, necessarily, rare: most people who do things, whatever those things happen to be, are not particularly good at them; but lack of flair in most cases needn't matter so very much. In teaching it does, though. Bethan Marshall insists that most teachers are not bad, but average. Semantically she is correct; but for all practical purposes they are one and the same thing.

A good teacher is a special teacher, the one above the average. Tony Blair well knows this, because he is using his old English teacher, Dr Eric Anderson, to head a television campaign to try to improve the "image" of teachers and teaching. Dr Anderson is evidently one of those teachers who can make a pupil want to learn — the only thing worth teaching — but then this is an easier proposition at Fettes School or Eton College, where his teaching posts have been.

Still, a good teacher is a good teacher anywhere. But what's hard now is that so few teachers at state schools can get on with teaching: most of the time they're having to act as social workers. And it doesn't surprise me that this puts off the most able and overcomes the least talented. The average inner-city school is no Malory Towers, even in its proposed and modernising television makeover.

But social difficulties and cultural anxieties aside, the real problem about teaching is that most people go into it because they can't think of anything better to do. In other words, most teachers are those graduates with the least imagination. I know money isn't everything, and it is particularly dispiriting when lack of ability is ignored in favour of a white about lack of funding. But it has always seemed to me that the ease with which anyone can train to be a teacher (and now that there are so many vacancies on training courses, entrance procedure is hardly going to get more stringent), followed

by the poorness of the pay once qualified, cannot but encourage the no-hopers. That a few talented, motivated, exceptionally able do-gooders are likewise welcomed, if grudgingly, is wonderful, but not enough.

Surely, if teacher training courses were made fantastically difficult, it would at least, after a while, confer some status on the profession. Those who got in would automatically gain kudos; now, they are almost derided, certainly pitied. Of course, teachers would have to get paid properly once they'd qualified. There's no getting around that, and I have never understood how those on the Right could seek to justify, intellectually, paying teachers poorly, when they more than anyone should realise that in



Nigella Lawson

a capitalist society pay is directly linked to value and status.

But the one thing teacher training colleges have to do is turn away those uninspired applicants who haven't the wit or enterprise to do anything else. Of course, that would probably mean getting rid of most of those who run the teacher training courses, but there you go.

All this, however, is the very opposite of what will happen: there aren't enough applicants for a huge number of teaching posts (mostly in science, maths and modern languages) and so, according to a report on yesterday's *Today* programme, you can now get into teacher training with the sort of qualifications that are hardly reflective of academic ability.

There may be something to say for this. After all, if you find learning easy, you may not have much understanding of what it must be like to find it gruellingly difficult. And yet, a good teacher has to be able to make the least academically inclined pupil wake up to the possibilities of the subject. In this respect, cleverness could be a handicap. But lack of cleverness doesn't necessarily bring with it greater intuition or inspirational enfusing powers: we have evident proof of that already.

## Clutching at apron strings

A LAW student has managed to get legal aid in order to sue his mother for her refusal to pay for him to go to university. He lives with his father and hasn't apparently had much to do with his mother for the past five years. But it's not this so much which invites comment (or, if it does, we probably would not be thanked by the courts for commenting on it), but the fact that this male student has two sisters who, instead of whining, are working their way through university.

I don't wish to be sexist, but this hardly surprises me: I waited while I was at Oxford; it wouldn't have occurred to my parents that my brother should have to supplement his own grant. I say this not as a man but, pitifully perhaps, as a boast.

Still, the fact that this law

student is so well versed in the legal implications of his situation augurs well for his choice of career. Perhaps his mother should make a quick out-of-court settlement and finance him — against a percentage of his future earnings.

## Another world

THE forces of reaction being what they are, it is inevitable that British Airways should be assaulted for changing its tail-decorating logo from the familiar Union Jack. But I am more concerned about another detail of its campaign: the irritating voice-over from the advertisement, which smugly advises that "the world is much closer than you think". This doesn't make any sense. Or do the copywriters come from another planet?

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## Alan Coren



**Farewell Cricklewood. I'm following in the slipstream of Martin Amis**

Forgive me. I hate to be the bearer of double whammies but I have, this morning, no option: all I can pray is that you will somehow find the fortitude to bear what I bear to you. Provided, of course, that the first whammy has not already left you supine in some darkened room, gaunt and listless beneath your saline drip and waiting for a council car to come in and massage your feet: in which event, you must not read one further word of this.

That first whammy — for those of you still standing, albeit still reeling — was borne by last weekend's *Sunday Times*, which, quite properly, gave over much of its front page to the shattering global news that Martin Amis was quitting the UK for New York, to escape media scrutiny and public preoccupation with his advances, his partner, and his teeth, to flee the new politics for which he so recently voted but with which he is now disappointed (he confesses himself nostalgic for Baroness Thatcher), to shed the "middle-class boredom" of Britain and — since "I have only got one big London book left to write — emigrate to where the history of the next century is already being written".

What an extraordinary and culturally devastating coincidence! For I, too, have been suffering those self-same torments and, having come to those self-same conclusions, am determined to leave Cricklewood for good. I only have one big Cricklewood column left to write — it will address man's eternal quest to discover why, four years ago, a Barnet council workman bothered to draw a red ring around the pothole outside my house, when it remains a pothole to this day — and, as soon as it is written, I shall be off.

I have had more than enough of media scrutiny (the *Ham & High* rings up every summer to ask which paperback I am taking on holiday) and as for the public's preoccupation with my advances, every time I bring a book out someone asks me what I got for it and then nods and says he'd always wondered why I was forced to do so much daytime television, doesn't your wife work? Whereupon, my having replied that she is a doctor, he immediately rolls his trousers up and asks her to have a look at his knee, so if Martin thinks society is obsessed with his partner, let me ask him how often the radiant Isabel has been required to feel a wonky patella during her soup course while simultaneously trying to avoid the eye of the woman opposite who has clearly been stitched up, every which way, by a dodgy plastic surgeon and now, alerted by the exposed joint, wants to know whom to sue?

As for my teeth, preoccupation with these is reaching hysteria. I have this year alone had six reminders from my dentist to come in for a check-up, each more threatening than the last. Any day now I expect to hear the unmistakable noise of a man towing a drill up a garden path, so the sooner I change addresses the better.

And yes, like Martin, I am disillusioned with new Tony. It's been weeks now, and nobody in Cricklewood seems better educated, healthier, richer or more caring. All that has happened is that The Cricklewood Arms, our only middle-class pub, has changed its name to The Ferret & Firkin, which seems, so far, to have done little to lift the boredom for which it has been a byword throughout the 25 years I have been going in, having a quick pint and going out again, without anyone looking up from the *Daily Mail* crossword. There used, mind, to be a fairly interesting greengrocer opposite, he had once played in goal for Cyprus, but his wife left him last year and he went back to Nicosia.

So I have concluded, like Martin, that enough is enough (and here I must apologise to the Editor, who was desperate to run the story as a front-page lead until I told him that, if he did, my only column idea was this pothole with a red ring around it) and it is time to pack my traps and quit Cricklewood.

I am going where the history of the next century is already being written. I have often sat in its shimmering gridlock, day and night, rapt with envy at the radiant hypermarkets and bustling fast-food outlets and teeming wine bars of the city that never sleeps. And I, too, am nostalgic for Lady Thatcher. I shall emigrate to Finchley.



# The disunited States

**A devolutionary tide is sweeping away Washington's power and dissolving social bonds, says US editor Bronwen Maddox**

In just five months, the Washington gibe that Tony Blair is "Clinton-like" has vanished. Now the institution is that the President has become "Blair-like": fluent in radical rhetoric but, unlike the Labour leader, incapable of delivering on promises of reform.

In this week's tour of Latin America, Mr Clinton called for a united continent of the Americas, woven together with the webs of trade. He may yet get something like it, although Congress has so far deprived him of the negotiating authority which would give his pledge weight. It is at home that his call for unity — for "one America" — sounds hollow. He has made this the theme of his second term, but the real story of the Clinton presidency is the startling shift in power from Washington to the 50 states.

Some in the Administration see this "new federalism" as a fashion of the age, and Scotland and Wales as the latest to promenade its colours. But while the White House has collaborated in America's current exercise in devolution, it is near-powerless to affect the results, even when they threaten the nation's cohesion and competitiveness.

Throughout the summer, the President's crutches and plastered leg served as all-too-appropriate symbols of Washington's impotence. But with the torn cartilage healed, he is still paralysed. Like the crippled voyeur in Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, watching the lighted windows of the apartments opposite, the President is forced to watch the tableau of the states acting out their diverging dramas.

Indeed the US, so often Germanic in its instincts, is beginning to resemble Germany in its legislative paralysis at national level. The dangers of too much federalism were pointed out two weeks ago by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, which offered Germany as a cautionary tale to other countries.

Real power in the US at the moment resides in the state capitals. Each edifice is a mimic of the dome dominating Washington, but each is occupied by a governor, whether Democrat or Republican, who is able to pursue more radical policies than anyone in Washington.

In welfare reform, under new powers granted by last year's legislation, the governors are devising novel ways of shoe-horning people into the workforce,

notably by cutting off their benefits. In combating crime, California is famously experimenting with life sentences for three-time offenders. Louisiana with curfews and Alabama with chain gangs of prisoners. The ambition which America today devotes to Big Science — today's scheduled launch of the Saturn probe Cassini is one of the last of these flamboyant projects — is now deployed in Big Social Science.

This year, Massachusetts and California have even ventured into setting their own terms of trade, in deciding unilaterally to apply sanctions against US companies trading with Burma in response to its human rights violations. At first Washington politicians were tempted to treat this as a droll manoeuvre: to British eyes it has something of the air of *Passport to Pinocchio*. But recently both parties have denounced the "Balkanisation of foreign policy".

Of course, the passion for states' rights is hardly new: it springs straight from the US Constitution. That document famously reserves to the states, or to the people, all powers not explicitly given to the federal Government.

Since the 1860s Civil War, when the South lost its battle to secede and to preserve slavery, the national Government has made few attempts to increase its sway. Most dramatic of these was Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 1930s New Deal, which gave the federal Government a bigger role in welfare, health and social security. The most recent bid was by the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s, in sending federal troops to enforce desegregation. Washington said in effect that if the US is to be one nation, the principle of racial equality must be upheld from coast to coast.

Since then, the inclination of Republican Administrations has been to give the states their head. Presidents Nixon and Reagan made it their mission to "get big government" off the backs of ordinary people. So did Newt Gingrich, Republi-

can Speaker of the House of Representatives, in his 1994 *Contract with America*.

To the astonishment and fury of many congressional Democrats, the trend has continued under Mr Clinton's presidency. He has been an agent in the erosion of his own power, most strikingly by signing last year's welfare reform Bill. The Supreme Court has helped: since the presidential election it has overturned some of Mr Clinton's favourite campaign pledges, such as curbing Internet pornography and gun sales.

Scanting the wind, states have moved to grab more power, making their own policy on the medical use of marijuana, abortions, and affirmative action.

To outsiders, particularly new Labour's policy aficionados, the kaleidoscope is at least educational. The 50 states have become a giant laboratory, a testing-ground for every social or economic philosophy ever mooted in the side caucuses of British party conferences.

But to the US itself, the trend is potentially damaging. In subtle ways, the shift has handicapped America's ability to understand itself. If the federal Government embarked on any social reforms, it was obliged to compile detailed data on the results — before, during and afterwards. The states have no such obligation. The shift has also left the American press at sea. Wedded to vox populi — the folksy interviews with "real-life cases" which lead into every story — newspapers are floundering now that the particular is such a poor guide to the general.

Mr Clinton, it is right, too, to have sounded an alarm to the threat to social cohesion. The new federalism is predicated, at least in part, on the belief that the South has shed its bigotry and intolerance. But as Mr Clinton pointed out in a speech last month in his home town of Little Rock, Arkansas, many schools and neighbourhoods have effectively re-segregated themselves since the 1970s.

Most serious, though, is the economic

impact. In telecommunications and electricity, the US has become astonishingly stuck in trying to promote local competition. Repeatedly, federal government intentions have been stymied by state regulators or courts. It would be comic were these not industries whose unnecessarily high prices handicap every person and business in the country.

To those concerned about the effects of devolution 1990s-style, it may be some compensation that the trend may reverse. The dirty secret of new federalism is that while the shift in power is represented as the fruit of ideology, it is more powerfully fuelled by money. The federal Government has run a headline-grabbing deficit, although shrinking, this stood at \$111 billion last year. But states and local governments — thanks to \$218 billion of federal subsidies — ran a \$105 billion surplus. It is a rarely challenged law of politics that power shifts to the place with most money.

States' current bounty will not last. The level of federal subsidies was set during the 1991 recession and will soon ratchet down. Meanwhile, the states' costs will rise: a second hidden truth often overlooked by British political strategists keen on transatlantic comparisons is that welfare reform is costing local government a fortune in childcare and transport costs.

That imminent financial rebalancing will reveal that the US has tackled the question of who should subsidise whom with as little directness as have Westminster and Scotland. It will show too, without doubt, that Americans are more attached to federal cash than it has suited the states-rights brigade to recognise. They are happy to pour scorn on Washington, until there is a flood in the Dakotas or a tornado in Arkansas.

But in the meantime, until financial forces puncture the ebullience of the governors, it is no wonder that Washington politicians look wistfully at Downing Street. The reforms of the Blair Government have the air of revolution, irresistible to any politician with half an eye on the history books. Ironically, given America's origins, it is a revolution which the US Government cannot hope to emulate.

Simon Jenkins is away

## Not quite first past the post

**Sir Robin Day on the best option for electoral reform**

In June 1931, Winston Churchill delivered his celebrated condemnation of the Alternative Vote. A Bill to introduce this system of electoral reform was then going through the House of Commons. Churchill denounced it as "the stupidest, the least scientific and the most unreal" of all plans for electoral reform. The decision in many constituencies would, he gave warning, be made "by the most worthless votes given for the most worthless candidates". Churchill explained with withering scorn: "Imagine making the representation of great constituencies dependent on the second preferences of the hindmost candidates."

Leaving aside his eccentric grammar and enjoyable hyperbole, Churchill's argument is not without force. We may expect his words to be quoted again and again as a powerful ammunition in the forthcoming battle about electoral reform. The Government has pledged that an independent commission on voting systems will be appointed early to recommend a proportional alternative to the first-past-the-post system. The word proportional should not be too strictly interpreted. It should not preclude the commission (perhaps to be headed by Lord Jenkins of Hillhead) from deciding that the Alternative Vote (AV) is one of the voting systems to be examined.

To experts, AV is not proportional, but it is often defined in reference books as a form of proportional representation. And in common political parlance AV is used to mean a system of electoral reform which is similar to, but simpler than, PR.

The Alternative Vote is simply itself. It is preferential voting in single-member constituencies. Instead of marking X against one candidate on the ballot paper, you mark the candidates 1, 2, 3 and 4, depending on how many there are. The candidate with an absolute majority (over 50 per cent) of the first preferences wins outright. If no candidate gets over 50 per cent, the candidate at the bottom of the poll is eliminated. The voters' second preferences are then transferred to the other candidates according to the preferences marked. This simple process continues until one of the leading candidates gets over 50 per cent.

It is worth remembering that in 1931 the Alternative Vote nearly became law in the UK. The Commons passed the Bill but a general election intervened and the Bill never became an Act.

If AV is proposed by the Government, it will be fiercely opposed by those (such as the Liberal Democrats) who have long demanded the system of proportional representation known as the Single Transferable Vote (STV). Under STV, you are able to have permanent coalition government. STV is the system in the Irish Republic. STV requires jumbo-sized, multi-member constituencies. It cannot be used for by-elections.

The AV system cannot be claimed to produce a proportional result nationally. But the case for AV is clear. It is simple. It does not involve an upheaval in our electoral process. It keeps the single-member seat, with the much-valued link between member and constituents irrespective of party. AV ensures that no MP can be elected on a minority vote. It would thus be fairer than first-past-the-post, under which many MPs can be elected even though more votes have been cast against them than for them.

STV achieves a more proportional result nationally, but AV is manifestly more fair in each of the individual constituencies on which our parliamentary system is based.

Nevertheless, AV could be made even simpler in three new ways which the forthcoming commission should consider. In the first place, the second preferences of eliminated candidates would count as only half-votes. Thus 2,940 second preferences would transfer as only 1,470 votes to the remaining candidates. A third preference would transfer as a third of a vote. Thus 760 third preferences would be transferred, when rounded down, as 253 votes. Likewise fourth preferences, if any, would count as quarter votes. Hence the weight of any preferences transferred from "worthless" bottom-of-the-poll candidates would be significantly reduced.

Secondly, not more than four preferences on any ballot paper, no matter how many candidates were standing, would be permitted. Finally, no preferences could be transferred if the candidate polled less than, for example, 3 per cent of the vote. This would not only simplify the whole AV process; it would also mean that fewer first preferences were thrown away on single-issue cranks.

These three important modifications would weaken the force of the Churchill argument. They would strengthen the case for AV. No voting system is perfect, but AV is surely the most reasonable and least unacceptable system of electoral reform for the House of Commons.

The commission will know, only too well, that innumerable commissions, conferences and inquiries have already ploughed this field. So let it report without delay, before the next century begins. The Government is committed to a referendum. Will the merits of different voting systems excite the popular interest or kindle the popular comprehension? We can only wonder, wait, and see.

If we are to have electoral reform, the case for AV, refined as suggested, seems overwhelming. The commission may agree. The Government may agree. But the people will decide.

JASPER GERARD

## Pass over

AT LAST, a good news football story. The Archbishop of Canterbury shares a peculiar passion for Arsenal with the Chief Rabbi. The unlikely couple are planning a trip to Highbury, the club's North London ground.

The news is likely to alarm more traditional members of Dr Jonathan Sacks's flock who think he has done quite enough cosying up to the Christian establishment without cheerleading on the Gunners with Dr George Carey.

But in December this outbreak of inter-faith harmony could be driven offside. The duo have invited Cardinal Basil Hume, leader of British Roman Catholics, to a future match between Arsenal and Newcastle United. Problem: the Cardinal is a Newcastle man. "Football has brought Dr Carey and myself together, and I was wondering if it would also work the same magic with Cardinal Hume," says the Chief Rabbi, who spent his formative years within a corner kick of Highbury. "I am just slightly worried that this fixture will ruin 50 years of good inter-faith relations."

As Voltaire could have warned them, a drubbing on the pitch can do terrible damage to one's religious faith. Sacks recalls a particu-

larly dismal performance against Manchester United. "We went down 6-2, one of our worst home defeats ever. Dr Carey and I spoke about it and agreed that God is a Manchester supporter."

ROYAL types really are taking their cause to the people. Ex-King Constantine of Greece is considering appearing on a chat show. He will defend monarchy in a live grilling on CNN from two old rotwellers, David Frost and Larry



Who is more powerful, a drugs czar or a drugs baron?

King. If the King should receive a hard time from Mr King, he might hit back with a little on-air revelation: that Mr King, a man most proud of his appearance, visits a hairdresser daily.

## Blood lines

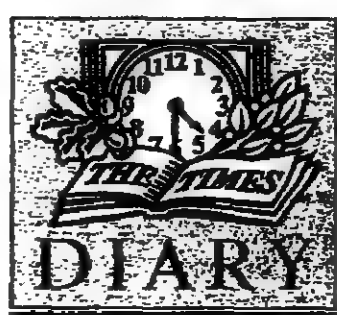
Martin McGuinness, poet. In a rather macabre attempt to show a softer side, the hard man of Irish nationalism has taken to writing verse. James Joyce he is not. Entitled *Postcard*, a copy of his first effort has come my way.

The words "gloriously crimson" and "from bloody Foreland" hit the eye; but here he is not talking of his day job, but of sunsets. He was inspired, if inspiration it be, by a fundraising trip to Manhattan. What next? The love poetry of the Rev Ian Paisley?

## Slippery slope

HE likes his holidays. Tony Blair. After his Tuscan jaunt, our Labour Prime Minister has been considering an even more congenial winter break: a week skiing at Klosters, the Swiss resort favoured by the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of York.

Tony and Cherie Blair — neither of whom is thought to have skied as an adult — have discussed visiting the resort over new year with



their three children. For playmates, the boys might stumble across Princes William and Harry, who learnt to ski before they could shake hands and are regulars. They were soundly beaten at football on the lawn at Chequers by the Blair boys and might well become a chance to chuck snowballs at the novices as they tumble on the nursery slopes.

But Blair is worried that to be the first PM in living memory to go skiing he might be accused of elitism.

BEFORE we grow too exercised by the Booker Prize, a look at sales of the shortlist is instructive. Whitaker Booktrack, which monitors 2,000 high street bookshops, says that *Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things* sold 892; Bernard Mac Laverty's *Grace Notes*, 451; *Tin Can's Quarantine*, 247; Mick Jackson's *The Underground Man*, 173; Tim Parks

Europe, 378; and Madeleine St John's mad *The Essence of the Thing*, 97. Oh, and Andrew Morton's sales in just one week? 41,042.

## Rosy David

DAVID BLUNKETT is to tell a church congregation how his formative years were "baptised with cidious kisses behind the haycock". The startling disclosure will be made to a memorial service at St James's, Piccadilly, for Laurie Lee, that masterful depicter of rural childhoods.

Blunkett will be talking about *Cider with Rosie* and how the book reflects his own schooldays, his identity with the school and his mistress, said Jack Gallagher, an old friend of Lee's.

Christopher Fry, the nonagenarian bard, has written a poem for the occasion. The last verse reads: "And when the pilgrimage is made/The shadow meeting with the shade/The graver-music will purring still/By Painswick stream and Birdlip Hill."

A MODERN law: as the waistline contracts, the bank balance expands. After Lord Lawson of Blaby made a packet detailing his transformation from whale to shrimp, his wife, Therese, is publishing the recipes that shrank the former Chancellor of the Exche-



Therese Lawson: profit

quer from 16 to 12 stone. Entitled *Middle Aged Spreads*, it is intended as a practical sequel to *The Nigel Lawson Diet Book*, which warbled on about the merits of starvation. Her agent, Michael Sissons, smells profit. "If sales of Nigel's book are anything to go by, we're on to something good," he says. "Sainsbury's is very excited — she's already started contributing to its magazine." Oh dear.

JASPER GERARD









## COURT CIRCULAR

RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN  
NEW DELHI

October 14: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh flew to Amritsar this morning and were received by the Governor of Punjab (Lieutenant General B.K.N. Chibber) and the Chief Minister (Shri Prakash Singh Badal).

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness later laid a Wreath at Jallianwala Bagh.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh afterwards visited the Golden Temple, Amritsar.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness this evening attended a Reception at the British High Commissioner's Residence.

This afternoon The Duke of Edinburgh laid a Wreath at Amar Jyoti (India Gate).

His Royal Highness, Founder and Chairman of the International Trusts, later, at the British High Commissioner's Residence, New Delhi, presented awards to young people who have achieved the Gold Standard in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

The Princess Royal, on behalf of The Queen, held an Investiture at Buckingham Palace this morning.

## BUCKINGHAM PALACE

October 14: The Duke of York, Patron, this morning visited the British Deaf Association's London office at 1-3 Worship Street, London EC2.

His Royal Highness, President, this evening attended the Royal Aero Club of the United Kingdom Council Dinner at the Royal Air Force Club, Piccadilly, London W1.

## BUCKINGHAM PALACE

October 14: The Prince Edward this evening attended the opening night performance by Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet at the Peacock Theatre, London WC2.

## Today's royal engagements

The Prince of Wales, as Patron, the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts, will host a performance, dinner and dance to launch the Creative Forum for Culture and the Economy at Buckingham Palace at 6.30pm.

The Duke of York, as Admiral, Sea Cadet Corps, will visit the Swansea Detachment of the Sea Cadet Corps at Swansea Marina, West Glamorgan at 10am; will open the new teaching block, North College, West Glamorgan at 12.15pm; and will attend the 25th Annual Sealers' Service in Wales at Llandaff Cathedral, Cardiff at 3pm.

The Princess Royal, as President, Save the Children Fund, will attend the annual meeting at

## BUCKINGHAM PALACE

October 14: The Princess Royal, Patron, the Home Farm Trust, this morning received Dr Frank Vane upon assuming the appointment of Chairman of Governors.

Mr Conan Carey (Director General) was present.

Her Royal Highness, President, Save the Children Fund, this afternoon visited United Biscuits, Walslow Road, London NW10.

The Princess Royal, President, Riding for the Disabled Association, later opened a new Indoor School at Penninwells Riding Centre, Edgwarebury Lane, Elstree, and was received by the Hon Richard Pleydell-Bouverie (Deputy Lieutenant of Hertfordshire).

Her Royal Highness this evening attended the Tenth Anniversary Dinner of the Charity Finance Directors' Group at the Brewery, Chiswell Street, London EC1.

## KENSINGTON PALACE

October 14: The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, St Peter's Research Trust, this evening attended an "Evening of Magic" at Fishmongers Hall, London EC2.

YORK HOUSE  
ST JAMES'S PALACE

October 14: The Duke of Kent, Patron, the Royal Institution of Great Britain, and Patron, the Year of Engineering Success, this morning attended Engineering in Health Week, Albermarle Street, London W1.

His Royal Highness, President of the Council, the King Edward VII Hospital for Officers, this evening attended a Reception at Stationers' Hall, Ave Maria Lane, London EC4.

## Luncheon

WS Atkins plc  
Mr Geoffrey Robinson, MP, was principal speaker at a luncheon given by WS Atkins plc at the Savoy Hotel yesterday. Guests included:

Dr Richard Baldwin (Divisional Managing Director, Alfred McAlpine Construction Limited), Mr David Bailey (Development Director, London Underground Limited), Mr Tim Cohen (Director, Balfour Beatty Limited), Mr Mike Collard (Head of Projects Development, Sir Robert McAlpine), Mr Ian Coucher (Managing Director, Transys), Mr Michael Cover (Partner, Davies Arnold Cooper), Mr Martin Laing (Chairman, John Laing plc), Mr David Muter (Chief Executive, Infrastar), Mr Jeremy Millar (Chief Executive, Herford Hospital), Mr Neil Monaghan (Chief Property Officer, Oxfordshire County Council), Mr Adrian Morgan (Chief Executive, PFI), Mr George Muter (Chief Executive, PFI), Mr Brian Myers (General Manager, BT plc), Mr John Sanders (Policy Manager, Essex County Council), Mr Paul Shepherd (Executive Chair-

man, Shepherd Construction Limited), Mr Geoff Spence (Head of Utilities, Deutsche Morgan Grenfell), Mr Julian Squire (Managing Director, Primary Management, Finance, Union Bank of Switzerland), Mr Denis Tunnicliffe (Managing Director, London Underground Limited), Mr Mike Welton (Chief Executive, Balfour Beatty Limited), Mr Michael Whitehouse (Head of Projects Group, Wragge & Co), Mr Keith Wright (Director, NHS Executive North West Department Health), Mr David Wright (Director of Environmental Services, Oxfordshire County Council), Directors for WS Atkins: Mr David Clements, Mr Richard Cuthbert, Mr Mike Donnelly, Mr Richard French, Professor John Fyfe, Dr Barry Hunt, Mr David James, Mr Richard Jarvis, Mr Michael Jeffries, Mr Paul Jones, Mr John Mobbs, Mr David Morgan, Mr Hugh Roberts, Mr David Slater, Mr John Winter.

## Prince urges 'heroes' to enter for awards

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE Prince of Wales will appear today to the nation's "unsung heroes and heroines" who work with local businesses to improve the quality of life in their neighbourhoods, to enter the twelfth annual Community Enterprise Awards.

The awards, run by the Prince's charity Business in the Community and sponsored by The Times and NatWest, aim to publicise the work of community entrepreneurs. "They can be found throughout the length and breadth of the United Kingdom - in city housing estates, market towns and rural villages," the Prince said yesterday. "Despite making considerable contributions to the social and economic regeneration of their communities, they often receive little support or recognition. I therefore call on all you unsung heroes and heroines to enter this year's Community Enterprise Awards and help to build on the achievements and contribution of this vital part of the economy."

Previous winners have set up housing co-operatives, built accommodation for the homeless, and developed kindergartens or adult education classes.

In a slight shift of emphasis, this year's awards will seek to recognise projects working in the field of social and economic regeneration. Some 24 prizes of £1,000

each will go to the winning projects. This year, for the first time, the winners and runners-up will also be entered into a Fellowship programme. They will be invited to a "weekend" from local business who will meet them regularly and act as a private consultant. The winners will also be invited to join a national network of community entrepreneurs and to attend seminars promoting best practice in community

work. Twelve of the winners will be taken on a study trip to America to see the work of leading community enterprises there.

Entries are invited from individuals, community organisations, businesses and local authorities. An overall winner will be chosen to receive the Charles Douglas Home Award. The awards will be presented in spring. Entry forms may be obtained from the Community Enterprise Awards, Business in the Community, 44 Baker Street, London W1M 1DH.

THE TIMES/NATWEST  
COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE AWARDS



Paddy Greene, Jill Archer in *The Archers* for 40 years, after receiving the MBE insignia yesterday.

## Dinners

Royal Aero Club  
The Duke of York, President of the Royal Aero Club, will be the guest of honour at a council dinner held last night at the RAF Club. Mr Frederick O. Marsh, chairman, presided.

Glovers' Company  
The Lord Mayor, accompanied by the Sheriff and their ladies, attended the annual dinner of the Glovers' Company held last night at the Mansion House. Mr Michael Down, Master, presided. Sir John Mills was the principal guest.

Affluence  
Mr Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, was the speaker at a dinner held last night at the Athenaeum. Mr Ian Hay Davison was in the chair.

Immigration Appellate Authority  
Judge Pearl, President of the Immigration Appeal Tribunal, presided at a dinner held last night at the Carlton Club to mark the retirement of his predecessor, Mr George Farmer. Vice-presidents of the Immigration Appeal Tribunal and adjudicators of the authority were present.

United Oxford & Cambridge University Club  
Dr Richard Lockett, Pepsy Librarian, Magdalene College, Cambridge, was the principal speaker at a dinner of the United Oxford & Cambridge University Club held last night at the club house. Mr Bruce Williams, chairman of the club, presided.

## University News

Durham  
Sir Kenneth Calman, Chief Medical Officer at the Department of Health, has been appointed as the next Vice-Chancellor and Warden of Durham University. He will take up his post in a year's time.

## Appointments

Great Britain - China Centre  
Mr David Brown has been elected to succeed Mr Graham Greene as Chairman of the Great Britain-China Centre from October 21.

## Durham University Society

The DUS Annual Dinner will be held at the House of Commons on November 7. Tickets at £40 from Graham Barker. Tel: 0181-566 3573.

## Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Virgil, post. Andes, Italy, 70 BC. Friedrich Nietzsche, philosopher, Rotten, Germany, 1844; Marie Stopes, scientist and sex education reformer, Edinburgh, 1880; Sir Pelham (P.G.) Woodhouse, humorous writer, Guildford, 1881.

DEATHS: Pierre Laval, Head of Vichy Government 1942-44, executed, Paris, 1945; Hermann Goering, war criminal, committed suicide, Nuremberg, 1946; Cole Porter, songwriter, 1964.

The shipwreck of the *Zeppelin* landed in New Jersey after its first transatlantic crossing, 1928.

## Dyers' Company

The following have been elected officers of the Dyers' Company for the ensuing year: Prime Warden, Mr J.R. Vaisey; Second Warden, Mr H. Morley-Fletcher.

## Forthcoming marriages

Mr H.G. Angus and Miss C.M. Friend  
The engagement is announced between Henry, son of Mr and Mrs Joslyn Angus, of Great Whittington, Northumberland, and Catherine, daughter of Dr and Mrs James Friend, of Blenheim Place, Aberdeen.

Mr G.M. Baker and Miss S.M.E. Horwitz  
The engagement is announced between Gary, son of Mr and Mrs Marshall Baker, of Radlett, Hertfordshire, and Sharon, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Horwitz, of Harrow, Middlesex.

Mr M.D. Craig and Miss S.D. Skinner  
The engagement is announced between Michael, son of Samuel and Margaret Craig, of Newtownards, Northern Ireland, and Shama, daughter of David and Maria Skinner, of Barton Turf, Norfolk.

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Mr A.J.S. Gibson and Miss R.C. Aldridge  
The engagement is announced between Alexander, son of Mr and Mrs David Gibson, of Oldbury, Groombridge, Sussex, and Rachel, daughter of Mr and Mrs David Aldridge, of Old Ridley Hall, Stockfield, Northumberland.

Mr J.A.D. Jones and Miss S.A. Tudor  
The engagement is announced between Jonathan, son of Mr and Mrs P.W. Jones, of Biddenden, Bedfordshire, and Sally Ann, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs D.R. Tudor, of Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

Mr P.J. Kendall and Miss N.R. Bedford  
The engagement is announced between Philip, second son of Mrs G.C. Kendall and the late Mr Kendall, of Sirenton-on-Dunsmore, and Nicola, daughter of Mr David Bedford, of Naunton, and Mrs Celia Bedford, of Newton.

Mr S.C.G. Pavlak and Miss L.B. Oliver  
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# A sorry tale of fact and friction



Critical success: *The Nazis* — A Warning From History has won favourable reviews and delivered the ratings



Factual programmes, such as the BBC's fly-on-the-windscreen *Driving School*, are once again big business

You may think documentaries are in a parlous state on ITV, but if it hadn't been for Roger James it could be even worse. As head of Carlton's documentary department, James was powerless to stop the banishment of many factual programmes to the graveyard shift of 10.40pm. But he has succeeded in keeping some of the big names of the ITV documentary — such as John Pilger and Antony Thomas — on the screen.

James began his career in the fine documentary tradition of Central TV, which Carlton swallowed up in 1994. Now 51, he has been shown the door by Carlton — just when he is chairing this week's Sheffield International Documentary Festival, an event which is celebrating the renaissance of the factual programme on British television over the past few years.

Carlton insists that James has resigned voluntarily and refuses to disclose the reasons why. James will not be drawn on the subject, beyond saying that he is sad to be leaving. But insiders say his departure has its roots in friction with the company's programme controller, Steve Clarke, former head of regional programmes at Central, whose main claim to fame has been ITV's much-derided monarchy debate.

On the face of it, this looks like a confrontation between a dinosaur from ITV's heavyweight past and a representative of the new, more accessible and commercially minded present. Except that one of James's recent commissions was *Neighbours from Hell*, a documentary glimpse of modern British life, which won ITV an audience of 11.74 million last July in a 9pm slot, and so impressed the Network Centre that it promptly commissioned an entire series of the same name.

That series will now have to be put together without James from the team which made the original such a success. Not only will James have left Carlton, but both the director, Rod Williams, and the director who devised the idea, Mark De Beaufort, have declined to work on it.

The irony is that Roger has managed to maintain all the traditions of the ITV documentary, in terms of making programmes which win awards and favourable reviews, but also demonstrated that he can deliver ratings. "In any other system he would be given a bottle of champagne, not the order of the boot."

As John Willis, the former Channel 4 programme controller, will tell delegates at Sheffield in his keynote address later this week, factual programmes — so often written off as part of a moribund and audience-unfriendly genre — are currently on the crest of a wave. From critical successes such as *The House* and *The Nazis* at one end of the spectrum to mainstream hits like *Driving School* and *Animal Hospital* at the other, with

Viewers cannot get enough of factual programmes, so why are ITV's documentaries in such a parlous state? Sue Summers reports



Roger James: taking his leave of Carlton

numerous *Cutting Edges*, *Secret Histories* and *Modern Times* underpinning the schedules in between, the documentary has become big business.

Or at least it is on the BBC and Channel 4, and on niche broadcasters such as Discovery. ITV has so far seemed unable to capitalise on the revival of factual programming, moving between a PR disaster such as the monarchy debate on the one hand and on the other, expensively funded traditional documentaries, generally transmitted late at night with the minimum of fanfare.

I'd argue that if ITV isn't careful, it will have lost the high ground without having embraced the more accessible ground," Roger James says. "The tragedy is that in many people's minds within ITV, documentaries are seen as boring programmes which have no place in the schedule, because they're associated with the past and with the work of the regulators."

As soon as regulation seemed less oppressive, after the last franchise round, ITV's first thought was how to get rid of factual programmes and this has given it a real problem over the past two or three years as they've become more successful."

Marcus Plantin, the ITV network director, the climate may be changing. ITV's shrewd new director of programmes, David Liddiment, has "categorically" denied it, but it seems that one of his first moves was to try to poach the man who has been chiefly responsible for the factual programming explosion — the BBC's head of documentaries and history, Paul Hamann.

Since the success of his first factual soap, *Children's Hospital*, three years ago, Hamann has doubled the size of his department. He has followed up with even bigger hits, such as *Animal Hospital*, *Airport* and the recent *Driving School* — which won an audience of 12 million against just 6 million for the ITV opposition, *The Bill*. The economics, too, are persuasive: £125,000 or less for an hour's documentary, compared with £650,000 or more for an hour's drama.

As Hamann puts it: "If you can make *Children's Hospital* for one quarter or one third of the cost of *The Bill* and you can outgun *The Bill* in the ratings, why spend more money on making a drama series which might not attract the audience?"

The BBC has also enabled Hamann to commission heavyweight series like *The Nazis* and to establish two of TV's sharpest single documentary slots in *Inside Story* and *Modern Times*. ITV could never match that breadth. But after losing out to Peter Salmon for the controlship of BBC1, Hamann was obviously judged to be ripe for a move.

"I couldn't leave, actually, because I think I have built up the best team in the business and I didn't want to damage it," he says. "But the whole landscape of ITV factual, unlike other parts of the schedule, needs a complete rethink. Marcus's biggest downside was his dislike of popular factual entertainment. It was quite extraordinary that he didn't take us on, but there's no doubt in my mind that David Liddiment will focus on the early slots much more."

As he prepared to leave ITV, however, Roger James sees "one danger in this great factual programme renaissance."

"The worry is that we will all get so carried away with factual's ability to deliver ratings to such a degree that we won't fight for and produce the more challenging programmes," he says.

"ITV still does them but I'd argue that it's getting harder. In the old days I was able to commission 15 network documentaries a year. Now I'm pitching to the Network Centre like any other independent and I'm lucky if I get six away."

"And the BBC too must guard its traditions. If I weren't reminded from time to time by heavyweight series like *The Nazis*, I'd ask myself, 'Isn't the BBC just a little too obsessed with the popular these days?'"

## Pay up and play the game

It may seem like small potatoes when compared with the future of the single European currency or even talks anywhere, but the government still has to decide one tricky problem this autumn — what sports events should be available "free" on national television and what would be left to free market forces and subscription charges.

Ask any viewer and the answer is simple. He or she wants everything without

having to pay an additional fee or the need to buy a satellite dish or pay for a cable connection. In the real world the arguments are much more complex and finely balanced.

All around the world, sport is being driven by the business imperative and most of the money comes from the sale of television rights. Telling a football club quoted on the stock market that it cannot charge for what is simply an electronic version of the turnstile is an obvious interference

with intellectual property rights. The sums involved are huge — and that money has been used to improve playing standards and rebuild crumbling stadiums. The cricket authorities were quick to shout "no ball" when threatened with going on the official list that would prevent them getting what they saw as the full value for their rights.

On the whole, the effect of satellite broadcasters — such as British Sky Broadcasting, in which News International, owner of *The Times*, has a 40 per cent stake — has been positive. Apart from the effect of the extra money that has gone to the Premiership clubs, satellite and cable allow the extra time and space to be devoted to sports, far beyond what a mixed schedule terrestrial broadcaster could justify.

And yet society has an interest here. In an increasingly fragmented world, sport is coming to fulfil a more and more important role as something to bind the nation and allow, for an hour or two, shared moments of triumph or despair.

For that reason the House of Lords was absolutely right to rebel against the previous Government and include a shortlist of events, such as the World Cup finals and the Wimbledon finals, which have to be available to terrestrial television — to all of us. History and tradition here play a part. People do not like suddenly having to pay for what was once free.

The question now for Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, is should the list be expanded, and if so, what should be on it? Should Saturday's vital World Cup qualifying game against Italy have been on terrestrial TV, as some argued, even though to insist on it would have meant finding a way to block a legal transaction between a willing seller, the Italian authorities, and a



RAYMOND SNODDY

willing buyer, BSkyB?

Gerald Kaufman and his National Heritage Select Committee (as it was) got it right when they argued that the aim should be to protect those events that attract almost everyone, including those who would not normally watch the sport involved. An obvious example is the Grand National, itself a listed event, although definitions are obviously subjective. Viewing figures provide something to work on — some indication of a scale of social support and a relative measure of deprivation if an event is not available on terrestrial television.

A second principle would be to set out more clear-cut rules for making recordings of subscription events available. Short snippets, or "news access" as it is known, should be routinely available and a tariff established for showing full recordings soon after the event. For ITV to be able to show the Italy-England match in full just after it had finished, in return for paying a rumoured one third of what BSkyB paid for the full rights, looks a useful precedent.

One difficult question remains — how to deal with the financial injustice that a sports organisation suffers by having its top events "listed".

One possible way out would be to provide some modest compensation for the owners of listed events. The obvious providers would be subscription broadcasters, and the sports which benefit hugely from selling subscription rights with pay-per-view rights to come. It may seem terribly unfair to make a subscription broadcaster pay for something for which it cannot bid but, believe me, subscription televised sport is a terrific business and it would be a small price to pay for political and social acceptance. Of course, a little lottery money might also be diverted.

'More and more, sport fulfils the role of binding the nation'

### THE TIMES DILLONS FORUM

#### An evening with Paul Johnson

Readers of *The Times* are invited to hear Paul Johnson, distinguished journalist and historian, debate 'The Future of America with the Newsnight presenter Gavin Esler and the former Ambassador to the US, Lord Rennick, on Monday October 20. They will discuss America's role in the 21st century, its phenomenal success and its chances of staying at the top. The forum marks the publication of Paul Johnson's new book *A History of the American People* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson £25) and will be held at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1. Tickets are £10 (concession £7.50) which includes £3 off the price of the book. There will be an opportunity for questions from the audience. Subject to demand this event will be interpreted by sign language.

### THE TIMES/DILLONS FORUM

In association with the Institute of United States Studies. Please send me — tickets at £10 each (£7.50 concessions) for the Times/Dillons Paul Johnson Forum on Monday, October 20, at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1.

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### A TIMES NEWSPAPERS PRIZE DRAW — THE TIMES

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Simply collect 10 differently numbered tokens from *The Times* and two differently numbered tokens from *The Sunday Times*. Tokens will be published daily until Sunday, November 2. Attach your tokens to the entry form which will be published on Saturday. Entries must be received by the closing date, Monday November 10, 1997.

No purchase necessary. You can obtain bonus tokens and an entry form by sending a stamped envelope to: *The Times/Churchill Insurance*, PO Box 5077, Leighton Buzzard LU7 7GD. A maximum of three bonus tokens per envelope permitted, requests for tokens must be received by November 1, 1997.

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 15 1997

## Fed chief urges governments to work with markets

BY GRAHAM SEARJEANT  
FINANCIAL EDITOR

THE head of America's central bank has issued a call for governments to work with the grain of markets to forestall financial crashes that will reverberate round the world. Alan Greenspan, chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board, said that financial integration and growth of derivatives, though a boon, raised the risks of policy

mistakes being penalised by financial disruption. Speaking ahead of the tenth anniversary of the October 1987 international stock market crash, Mr Greenspan said: "Increasing global financial efficiency, by creating the mechanisms for mistakes to ricochet throughout the global financial system, has patently increased the potential for systemic risk."

His words are likely to be seen as preparing the way for some rise in American interest rates, to forestall the impact on Wall Street where share prices had edged down 0.6 per cent by lunchtime. Mr Greenspan said that these changes made it more vital than ever before that central banks and governments should pursue sound anti-inflationary policies. He told the Cato Institute in Washington that the speed of transmission of economic news was a

plus for the world economy but had drawbacks. "The turmoil in the European exchange-rate mechanism in 1992, the plunge in the exchange rate of the Mexican peso at the end of 1994 and early 1995 and the recent sharp exchange rate adjustments in a number of Asian economies have shown how the new world of financial trading can punish policy misalignments, actual or perceived, with amazing alacrity."

In thinly veiled advice to Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mr Greenspan said that governments could not reverse technology and that attempts to impose restrictions or controls on financial flows will bring "adverse, unintended consequences". Governments should instead concentrate on issuing timely information about their economies, including foreign exchange obligations, and tailor policies to avoid distorting their financial systems.

At the East Asian Economic Summit in Hong Kong, leaders of Singapore and the Philippines also backed open markets, implicitly disagreeing with Dr Mahathir, who threatened stringent controls to stop speculation but has since moderated his stance. Goh Chok Tong, the Prime Minister of Singapore, said: "We cannot and must not turn the clock back. Rather, we must turn it forward."

## BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES	
FTSE 100	6296.9 (-1.3)
Nikkei	17306.38 (-1.01)
Dow Jones	8072.48 (+1.23)
S&P Composite	988.03 (-0.07)

US YIELD	
Federal Funds	5.00%
Long Bond	6.38%
Yield	

EUROPEAN MARKET	
5-year Interbank	7.14% (7.14)
Libor 6m	11.80% (11.80)
Yield (Dec)	

STRENGTH	
New York	1.8197* (1.8235)
London	1.8182 (1.8231)
DAX	2.9451 (2.9414)
FF	8.5344 (8.5414)
SP	2.3851 (2.3728)
Ver	107.08 (106.78)
Index	100.2 (100.4)

US STOCKS	
London	1.7848* (1.7808)
DAX	8.5851* (8.5750)
SP	1.4612* (1.4620)
Ver	121.62* (120.72)
Index	106.1 (104.5)

NORTH SEA OIL	
Brent 15-day (Dec)	519.86 (520.16)
London close	520.15 (520.85)

RUSH JOB	
St Ives, the printing group, stands to gain up to £30 million this year from the flurry of takeover activity. It commands 20 per cent of the market for printing takeover documents at short notice. Page 29	
Franchise National Express has secured confirmation of one of its key rail franchises with the announcement of a £41 million order for new trains. Page 28	

## Berkeley shows the City how to escape MMC

BY PAUL DURMAN

THE innovative structure of a £125 million share issue by Berkeley Group, the upmarket house-builder, may enable the City to escape a referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, its designer claimed yesterday. John Bridgman, Director-General of Fair Trading, recently told the City that he is "minded to refer" the system of underwriting new share issues to the Commission for investigation. The Office of Fair Trading believes the underwriting system may be a complex monopoly that requires companies to pay more than they need when they seek to raise money.

The scheme deployed by J Henry Schroder, the merchant bank, on behalf of Berkeley was estimated to have saved the housebuilder £1.1 million in City fees. Berkeley paid sub-underwriting commissions of 0.3 per cent of the amount raised, a reduction from the traditional 1.25 per cent. Richard Broadbent, head of investment banking at Schroders, said he believed the new approach should mean "Bridgman will at least give us a further pop before, God help us, he launches an investigation".

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The OFT said this development was a new factor that Mr Bridgman would have to consider before taking a final decision on whether a monopolies investigation was necessary. It was Schroders that first broke the convention of paying a fixed 1.25 per cent commission to the investors who guarantee new share issues in its handling of last year's £220 million rights issue for Stakis, the hotels group. Its innovation, inviting sub-underwriters to offer to accept a lower commission rate, has been adopted by other investment banks and, as a consequence, average commission levels have fallen to about 1 per cent.

Schroders has now taken its original idea further. Firstly, it has offered the new shares at a deep discount to the prevailing market price — at 56p against Berkeley's opening price of 760p. Mr Broadbent said the new approach should mean "Bridgman will at least give us a further pop before, God help us, he launches an investigation".

Secondly, Schroders was willing to accept offers from all investors and market-makers, instead of restricting the subunderwriting to the traditionally narrow list of blue chip institutions.

Mr Broadbent said the third and potentially most important change was to allow Berkeley's existing shareholders to participate in the subunderwriting pro rata to their shareholding. Almost half of the Berkeley issue was underwritten by existing shareholders.

Berkeley, probably the best regarded company in its sector, said it wanted the money to carry on buying land — even though it still has cash from having raised £33 million in a placing at 75p earlier this year. Shareholders are offered two new shares for every nine they hold. Berkeley's shares closed at 728p — a small increase after adjusting for the rights issue.

Tony Pidgley, the former Barnardo's boy who is Berkeley's chief executive, has overseen a rapid expansion of the company. Berkeley forecast that its profits in the year to next April will be at least £50 million, an increase of 20 per cent over last year's £75 million total.



Tony Pidgley, chief executive, has overseen a rapid expansion of the company

## Revised takeover plan lifts WH Smith

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

JEREMY HARDIE and Richard Handover, the chairman and chief executive of WH Smith, have bowed to pressure and agreed to put revised takeover proposals from Tim Waterstone before the troubled retail group's board.

Hopes that the proposals may turn into a full bid helped drive WH Smith's share price 15p higher to 406p, a level not seen since June.

The board threw out Mr Waterstone's original proposal a fortnight ago. The key changes are believed to be a reduction in the value given to Daisy and Tom, Mr Waterstone's children's shops, from £35 million to nearer £9 million, and a reduction in the level of debt the deal would involve.

There is also a suggestion that the proceeds from disposals of parts of the group, such as Virgin Our Price and the US retail operations, would be returned to shareholders. WH Smith said in a statement that, at the request of Mr Waterstone, their discussions will be kept confidential.

However, Mr Handover is expected to discuss the new proposals with the institutional shareholders he has already agreed to meet later this week.

## Ofgas secures cuts in pipeline fees

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

A TWO-YEAR dispute between the gas regulator and BG over pipeline charges ended yesterday with a higher than expected 25 per cent one-off cut. But customers were warned that they may not enjoy the full benefit of the possible £34 cut in bills.

BG, which last year accused Clare Spottiswoode, the industry regulator, of mounting the "biggest smash and grab raid" in corporate history, accepted the cut in licence amendments to implement a Monopolies and Mergers Commission ruling it had already backed.

The jump in the one-off cut on charges levied by Transco, BG's pipeline subsidiary, from the MMC's 21 per cent to 25, has been made because gas volumes going through the system are higher than the MMC had expected. As a result, transport charges must be hit harder to keep revenues within the limits imposed by the MMC. Ofgas believes this could trim an extra £5 from bills on top of the £29 it first suggested. But Centrica is the only Transco gas supply customer obliged to pass through reduced shipping costs.

Sue Slipman, director of the Gas Consumers Council, said: "We welcome this agreement... however, it would be unwise to raise consumer expectations of price reductions too high." Shipping accounts for less than half of a gas bill and reductions will also be subject to other factors.

Ms Spottiswoode said the pricing regime was "a very calm and clear protection of customer interests". David Varney, chief executive of BG, said: "This is 99 per cent of what the MMC offered us."

BG formed when British Gas demerged its pipeline operation from its downstream business, is reducing its workforce by 2,500 in a cost-cutting drive it said was necessitated by the MMC ruling. Union Doug Collins, regional officer of the AERU engineering workers union, said: "We will be importing goods and exporting jobs."

The action is part of restructuring announced by the company in June, when it said it must cut 12,000 jobs worldwide. The company said it will keep 3,500 employees in the UK and 100,000 throughout its operations.

Commentary, page 29

## Electrolux sheds 1,300 jobs in UK

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

ABOUT 1,300 UK jobs are to be axed with the closure of one Electrolux factory and the end of refrigeration production at another.

One union, which has been working with managers on survival plans for the factories in Luton, Bedfordshire, and Spenny Moor, Co Durham, called the move "devastating and tragic". The Luton factory will close, while Spenny Moor will make only cookers.

The Swedish-owned company said it was transferring the manufacture of refrigerators and vacuum cleaners to factories in other countries, thought to be the United States and Hungary. Doug Collins, regional officer of the AERU engineering workers union, said: "We will be importing goods and exporting jobs."

The action is part of restructuring announced by the company in June, when it said it must cut 12,000 jobs worldwide. The company said it will keep 3,500 employees in the UK and 100,000 throughout its operations.

## Merger top-up for Speciality chiefs

BY CARL MORTIMER

TWO directors of Speciality Shops, the property investment company, will each receive a £180,000 top-up to their pension funds after agreeing to a £37 million takeover bid from Conrad Riblat, the property consultancy and investment group chaired by John Riblat.

Conrad Riblat is making an all-share offer for Speciality Shops, which owns interests in ten shopping centres, including the Waverley centre in Edinburgh and Victoria Place in London. The offer of 162p per share, described as a merger, is based on 54.12 CR shares for 100 Speciality shares and will give Speciality Shops investors a 40.6 per cent interest in Milner Group, the merged company.

David Houghton and Stephen Jaffe, founders and joint managing directors of Speciality Shops, will join the board of Milner Group as deputy chairman and managing director (property), respectively. Together they own less than 0.5 per cent of Speciality Shops, but each is to receive a one-off payment of £180,000 into their respective pension schemes when the merger is declared unconditional.

Philip Lewis, chief executive of Conrad Riblat, said the payments were intended to reflect a change of status: "When they come on to our board, you could argue there has been a loss of office. They are joint managing directors at the moment. They won't have control on the new board."

A spokesman for BZW, which is advising Speciality Shops said: "The distinction is whether they are being paid in their roles as directors or as a special deal for certain shareholders. We are satisfied that it is the former."

Milner Group will own a property portfolio worth £185 million of which 63 per cent will be retail.

Speciality was floated in 1994 at 130p per share with the acquisition of a shopping centre from Ponsel Properties, part of the renamed Hermes fund management group. Hermes controls 28 per cent of Speciality and will be accepting the offer.

Tempos, page 30

## Arriva arrives and upsets Sir Tom

BY FRASER NELSON

COWIE GROUP, the car dealer and bus operator, has claimed the last laugh in its long-running battle with Sir Tom Cowie, its exiled founder, by stripping his surname from its 92,000 vehicles.

The company is paying £1.5 million for a product relaunch, arguing that Sir Tom's family name sticks in the throats of continental customers. From next week it will begin to spray a new

brand name across its buses, car dealerships and fleet hire: Arriva. Cowie clients were told yesterday that the old name was acting as a psychological barrier to growth. Sir James McKinnon, chairman, said: "The Cowie brand simply does not give us the profile we feel we deserve. It fails to travel well into other languages and cultures. The answer is simple. One brand. One company. One vision."

Sir Tom, said yesterday: "This is pathetic snipe at me. It's ludicrous."

wasteful and vindictive, but this typifies the kind of idiots I have unfortunately left running the company."

The name change was kept a secret, and about 50 clients were invited to Canary Wharf yesterday without being told the purpose of the meeting. They were told the Cowie name was regressive, while the name Arriva would make the company seem dynamic, proactive and appeal to women for psychological reasons. The change met a mixed reception. One leasing divi-

sion client said: "As a woman, I couldn't care if the company is called Joe, Fred or Cowie. I look at what the company has to offer on a business basis not by how much I like its name."

Arriva, which means nothing in any language, will be put on every one of Cowie's 77,000 buses and every other brand name — from Green Line to British Bus — will be deleted. Analysts said abolishing the brand names should save £300,000 on repainting buses the 2-move between fleets.

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## Transport group wins franchise with £41m rail order

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY  
TRANSPORT  
CORRESPONDENT

NATIONAL EXPRESS has secured confirmation of one of its key rail franchises with the announcement of a £41 million order for new trains.

The bus and train group has been granted a ten-year franchise on its Midland Mainline network following the decision to purchase 17 new trains serving the East Midlands.

The order, which will enable the company to double the number of services south of Derby and Nottingham, follows a 9 per cent increase in passengers in the first year of the franchise.

The trains, to be built by Adtranz in Derby, will be leased over the franchise period from Porterbrook, the rolling stock company. National Express, which runs five rail franchises, was granted a provisional ten-year franchise on the Midland Mainline last year on condition that it increased services and added trains to the network.

The company was required under its franchise agreement to add 12 new trains to its Midlands service, and the larger order was hailed by the company's directors as a signal of the success of the privatised system. It also makes more likely closer coordination between Midland Mainline and Central trains, another franchise working in the Midlands and owned by National Express.

The announcement coincides with pressure from several leading train operating companies for better arrangements to encourage investment in new trains. They are urging ministers to allow the cost of major investment to be spread over a longer period than a single franchise so that they do not have to bear the full burden of investment over a seven, ten or fifteen-year period.



Brian Ivory, left, the chief executive of Highland Distilleries, raises a glass with John Goodwin, chairman, yesterday.

## Highland attacks rising duty

By DOMINIC WALSH

JOHN GOODWIN used his last results presentation as chairman of Highland Distilleries to launch a scathing attack on the Government's decision to raise duty on spirits in the New Year.

"Kenneth Clarke reduced it for two successive years," he said. "It was a pretty incredible decision to reverse that. It's anti-British, it's anti-Scottish and it's anti-manufacturing and we can't understand it."

His comments came as Highland, boosted by a mid-year contribution from Macaulay-Gleadow, reported pre-tax profits 7 per cent higher at £43.1 million, on turnover 9 per cent better at £201.4 million.

The total dividend rises 7 per cent to 8.9p.

## France tries to dispel fears over new defence group

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

FRANCE's socialist Government yesterday sought to dispel concern that the new defence giant formed around Thomson-CSF and Alcatel Alsthom would act as a brake on European defence industry consolidations.

Alain Richard, the Defence Minister, said that the group, which will also involve Dassault and Aérospatiale, should seek alliances with GEC of Britain and Daimler Benz Aerospace (Dasa) of

Germany. However, his comments are unlikely to appease market scepticism over a deal that should end 18 months of hesitation over Thomson-CSF's future and result in its privatisation.

Alcatel's chairman, Serge Tchuruk, emerged triumphant from his battle with Lagardère when the Government said his company, Allied Dassault, would obtain a 25 per cent stake in Thomson-CSF in return for pooling its

telecommunications and space business. No cash will change hands.

The announcement was a blow for British Aerospace which, along with Dasa, had backed the bid by Lagardère, owner of Matra. The new group will also include the satellites of the state-owned Aérospatiale, which will obtain a stake of about 10 per cent, as well as the electronics of Dassault.

With Thomson-CSF's staff

to be offered a small number of shares, the state will lose control of the group, seeing its stake fall from 58 to about 40 per cent.

Alcatel said in a statement Thomson-CSF would become "number one in the world in military communications, number three in radar, and number four in satellite telecommunications".

M Richard said yesterday the new group was in a good position to conclude alliances

with companies such as GEC and Dasa. However, many analysts are not so confident. They believe that the group lacks a clear control-room and could be torn between the diverging interests of its big shareholders: the State and Alcatel.

They are also concerned that M Jospin has imposed a "Franco-French solution" that flies in the face of a much-needed restructuring of the European defence sector.

## Sun Life Irish disposal Sales staff suspended

By RICHARD MILES

SUN LIFE & PROVINCIAL, the life insurer, is selling its life and pensions business in the Republic of Ireland to Bank of Ireland for Ir£213 million (£191.4 million).

Bank of Ireland offered Ir£23.82 per share, a 19 per cent premium on Monday's closing price of Ir£20, for the insurer's 83 per cent stake in New Ireland Holdings. The bank yesterday issued Ir£198.9 million of new shares to help to finance the deal.

Mark Wood, chief executive of Sun Life & Provincial, said the disposal would allow the company to "focus on its key markets" in the UK after a £760 million merger with Amity & Law in July.

Bank of Ireland, which completed its acquisition of British & West-Beidings Society in July, said New Ireland would boost its share of the expanding Irish life and pensions market to 18 per cent, putting it second to Irish Life.

LIVERPOOL VICTORIA, which sells savings and insurance policies door-to-door, has suspended its entire sales force indefinitely after discovering problems with staff training and references.

The move is costing the friendly society £1 million in lost business for every month the sales force is off the road. Staff are being compensated for loss of earnings.

The suspension began yesterday and affects all 230 financial advisers and 40

managers. It comes after the Bournemouth society relocated from Central London and underwent a substantial restructuring. A large number of advisers were dismissed and a new set of training and references was introduced.

Key Huxley, chief executive of the Personal Investment Authority (PIA), had been informed. The company said that it had discovered gaps in references for new staff and in training and competence of existing advisers.

## Airbus chairman to leave in shake-up

AIRBUS INDUSTRIE, the pan-European aircraft maker, revealed yesterday that Edzard Reuter, the chairman of its supervisory board, will stand down by the end of this year.

The move is part of a restructuring plan under which Airbus would become a stand-alone company at the beginning of 1999. It is now a consortium owned by British Aerospace, Aérospatiale of France, Dasa of Germany and Casa of Spain, and is widely perceived to be unwieldy.

Herr Reuter's replacement will be the head of one of these companies. A new president of Airbus' management is also due to be appointed. Airbus announced that it has received an order from Tunisair of Tunisia worth up to £185 million.

## Ramco shares fall again

SHARES in Ramco Energy, which traded at £12.30 earlier this year, fell a further 37.5p to 802.4p yesterday after the oil and gas group reported pre-tax losses of £370,000 for the six months to June 30, against profits of £853,000 in the first half of the previous year. The loss per share was 1.84p (earnings of 2.91p). Again, there is no interim dividend. The company said its £54 million failed takeover bid for JCK had cost about £400,000. Ramco has operations in Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Czech Republic and Poland.

## Payoff for Jerome

S JEROME & SONS, textile manufacturer and supplier, to Marks & Spencer, is to pay £237,000 to Stephen Jerome, who quit as joint managing director last month. The sum will be included in restructuring costs for the full year. Pre-tax profits in the six months to June 30 were down from £444,000 to £381,000. The company spent £130,000 on restructuring in the first half. Earnings per share fell to 2.9p (4.6p) and the company will pay an interim dividend of 1.125p (1p) on November 13.

## Hanson sale nets \$52m

HANSON is raising \$52.5 million (£32.5 million) from the sale of its 32 per cent stake in Koppers Industries, a manufacturer and supplier of coke and chemicals. Christopher Collins, Hanson's chairman, said the business came into the group when Hanson acquired Beazer in 1991. The Koppers aggregates business now forms part of Cornerstone, Hanson's sand, gravel and crushed stone operation. The Koppers Industries stake has been bought by its management and their backers.

## Burke cashes in shares

TREVOR BURKE, founder of PhoneLink, the telephone information and marketing company, has sold four million of his family's shares at 60p each, raising £2.4 million. The shares, an 8.3 per cent stake, have been sold to Reggeborgh Beher, a Dutch investment company. Reggeborgh has an option to buy the remaining 34.7 per cent stake owned by Mr Burke's family at 80p per share before April 13, 1998. Reggeborgh also has an option to take its holding to 29.9 per cent up to 15 working days after PhoneLink announces its 1998 to 1999 results.

## Henry Boot advances

HENRY BOOT, the Sheffield construction and property group, lifted pre-tax profits to £3.2 million from £2.9 million in the six months to June 30 in spite of a fall in turnover to £60.4 million from £75.5 million. Earnings per share rose by 10 per cent to 8.6p (7.8p) and an interim dividend of 2.3p (2.1p) will be paid on November 18. The group blamed the fall in turnover on a lack of large development sales falling into the period. The company forecasts that turnover in 1997 will be about the same as in 1996.

## Ideal lifts dividend

IDEAL HARDWARE, the computer systems distributor, reported pre-tax profits of £10.75 million for the extended 15-month financial year ended August 2 on turnover of £221.6 million. The company said it had achieved further organic growth in a challenging market for information-technology products and services. Earnings were 33.2p a share. Ideal reported pre-tax profits of £7.8 million and earnings of 24.7p a share for the 12 months to May 3, 1996. The final dividend of 3p a share lifts the total to 16.2p a share from 10.8p.

## Goshawk back in profit

GOSHAWK INSURANCE HOLDINGS, the specialist Lloyd's of London group, recorded profits of £1.7 million before tax in the first half of 1997, compared with a loss of £2.5 million in the first half of 1996. David Hooker, chairman, said that weak rates and overcapacity were still making Lloyd's a difficult market. An interim dividend of 1.2p (0p) will be paid on December 3. Goshawk recently bought Matheson's Lloyd's investment trust for £33.5 million to provide long-term capital for the group and the syndicates it manages.

## FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank
Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy
Australia \$	2.51	2.13	Malta	0.88
Austria Sch	32.88	19.22	Netherlands Old	3.389
Belgium Fr	61.75	51.72	New Zealand \$	0.804
Canada \$	2.283	2.175	Portugal Esc	2.47
Denmark Kr	0.883	0.611	S Africa Rd	11.12
Finland Mk	11.40	10.61	Spain Pta	270.50
France Fr	9.07	8.22	Sweden Kr	7.32
Germany Dm	9.59	9.21	Switzerland Fr	202.50
Greece Dr	3.00	2.75	Taiwan Nt	11.99
Hong Kong \$	473	434	Thailand Ba	2.52
Iceland Is	12.12	12.12	Turkey Lira	277.65
Ireland P	1.28	1.08	USA \$	1.728
Israel Sh	1.07	1.07		1.688
Japan Yen	211.73	194.20		

Notes for small denomination bank notes supplied by Barclays Bank. Other rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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## Prince takes 5.9% stake in Daewoo

Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal, the Saudi businessman, is to take a 5.9 per cent stake in Daewoo Corporation, the South Korean industrial group. The prince believes that Daewoo is "a well-balanced company" and that "conditions in the Pacific Rim are now ripe for investment".

He said: "This is the first investment in many to come in the region, and I have great confidence in the Far East." The prince has stakes in Citicorp, the US bank, Apple Computer and a wide range of hotel and leisure companies including Four Seasons-Regent. He has held stakes in Euro Disney and Canary Wharf. The prince is to take the stake via the purchase of \$50.5 million (£30 million) of convertible bonds in Daewoo by Kingdom Inc.

## Wilmington advances

Wilmington Group, the business magazine publishers, lifted pre-tax profits 32 per cent to £2.72 million on turnover up 15 per cent to £17.8 million in the six months to August 31. Earnings rose 33 per cent to 2.54p a share and a single annual dividend will be paid in July.

Brian Gilbert, Wilmington's chief executive, who completed seven small acquisitions in the past 18 months, yesterday promised a "very satisfactory set of results for the full year". Analysts are predicting pre-tax profits of £3.2 million to £3.3 million. The group listed on the Stock Exchange in December 1995.

## Sales surge for Reliance

Reliance Industries, India's largest private sector company, raised its half-year pre-tax profit by 29 per cent to \$232 million.

The petrochemicals to textiles group enjoyed a 57 per cent surge in sales to \$1.75 billion (£1.1 billion), because of the addition of new capacity at its Hazira plant in Gujarat. Reliance said that its operating margin was maintained at 19 per cent despite lower prices and higher raw material costs.

## Departing Shield chief cashes in

By PAUL DUFFMAN

THE wildly volatile shares in Shield Diagnostics plunged by 100p to 617.4p yesterday as Gordon Hall cashed in two-thirds of his options for £1.5 million or more after making an abrupt departure from his post as managing director.

Mr Hall, 55, was leading the negotiations to secure a marketing deal for Shield's heart disease test, regarded as a potential blockbuster. Hamish Hale, chairman, said Mr Hall had been planning to retire for some time.

Mr Hall's decision to sell was interpreted as a lack of confidence in the progress of the negotiations, although Dr Hale said Shield still hoped to conclude a deal before the end of the year. Mr Hall will continue working on the negotiations as a consultant.

Although Shield's shares have soared this year, it has often seemed accident-prone because of leaks of sensitive information, poorly timed share sales by directors and other mishaps.

David Evans, Shield's finance director, has taken over as managing director.

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# Schroders gets it bang to rights



COMMENTARY  
by our City Editor

John Bridgeman set last Friday as the closing date for submissions to dissuade him from launching a full scale Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation into the way the City raises equity capital for companies. They may have missed that deadline, but yesterday the innovative brains at Schroders produced the most eloquent evidence as to why the Director-General of Fair Trading need not interfere in this particular aspect of City business.

The bank's rights issue on behalf of Berkeley Group, the housebuilder, answers any possible qualms that Mr Bridgeman might have about alterable corporate customers being held to ransom by a City cartel. If other houses are wise, they should quickly persuade one or two of their clients to go in for a round of fundraising on similar terms, thus providing all the evidence that Mr Bridgeman might need to convince him that the rights issue system can function fairly and efficiently.

The one certainty is that a prolonged MMC inquiry would be a drain on City time, be undeniably highly priced, and the cost would eventually find its way on to clients' bills.

Schroders was one of the first banks to take seriously the threat that Mr Bridgeman posed when he began to query why the total cost of a rights issue was always 2 per cent. For someone whose

background was in industry, at Alcan, the newcomer at the OFT might reasonably have thought that 'he had whiff of an unsavoury cartel'.

That he was not entirely wrong is apparent from the fact that the cost of a rights issue is now not always 2 per cent. Without too much trouble, Schroders has brought the cost down to 0.3 per cent by means of a deep discount and tendered sub-underwriting.

This is not the kind of innovation that the giant houses from the United States wanted to see. They have been devoting much effort to persuading Mr Bridgeman that their system of book building is infinitely preferable to the staid old British rights issue, while glossing over the fact that it is generally considerably more expensive. What the Americans would eschew, and the rights issue preserves, is the crucial issue of ownership, in the form of pre-emption rights.

While providing reasonably priced capital for companies is a laudable aim, stripping investors of their rights is hardly the ideal way of achieving it. The investors who own Berkeley retain their pre-emption rights in the latest round of fund

raising, and so they should. Mr Bridgeman may have highlighted a problem but if, as it appears, he has inspired the offenders to come up with their own solution, then he should move on to rootle out sharp practice elsewhere. And if the investment banks try to slip back to the comfort of the familiar 2 per cent routine, then perhaps it is up to their clients to insist on a better deal. They could always threaten to head for Schroders.

## City must hold out for one set of rules

International trade talks rarely grab headline attention. Tortuously slow and mind-bogglingly detailed, discussions conducted under the auspices of the World Trade Organisation are almost predestined to receive little scrutiny. Thankfully, a paper to be published today by the European

Policy Forum provides a timely reminder that talks on financial services liberalisation are fast reaching their December deadline. The paper gives warning that failure to reach agreement would jeopardise the future of the City of London.

Europe, and the UK in particular, has much to gain from a successful conclusion to the talks. Liberalisation would allow UK companies into emerging markets at a time when financial services look ripe for rapid expansion. Insurance premiums account for around 8 per cent of GDP in developed economies but less than 2 per cent of GDP in countries such as Mexico and Turkey. Cynics might also suggest that the insurance industry will be only too willing to expand far from the 'naming and shaming' culture of their domestic base. The DTI estimates that in total an agreement could be worth a further £5 billion to the British financial services sector.

Attempts to sign a financial services liberalisation agreement, however, have failed twice before and there is a real danger that the latest round of talks will also stall. European negotiators are caught between an over-enthusiastic United States, inclined to reject anything that stops short of full liberalisation, and the still sceptical Asian and emerging market nations.

The financial markets crisis in South East Asia has hardly helped the liberalisers' cause. The string of banking failures across the region has increased scepticism over further deregulation. The IMF has also muddled the waters with its talk of liberalising capital accounts — a different ambition.

But the report makes the vital point that the aim of an agreement on financial services is not to remove the right of individual nations to regulate their financial markets, but simply to create a level playing field. The report

concludes there are grounds for "cautious optimism" but Europe must be prepared to ask for an extension to the talks if necessary.

The alternative — a series of bilateral agreements and even new protective measures in some markets — is not worth countenancing for the City of London.

## Utilitarian will called for

Margaret Beckett should have been taking notes yesterday when BC and Ofgas finally kissed and made up after their exhaustive battle over pipeline cost controls. The President of the Board of Trade has said that predictability in utility regulation will be a priority for the Government in its regulatory review. There can be little less predictable than a two-year tussle which continued into the final throes of implementing an MMC judgment.

After the MMC's recommendation, there proved to be considerable scope for interpretation. Clare Spottiswoode, the regulator, deciding that gas volumes had increased to such a

level that the MMC figures were invalidated, suggested capping BG's pipeline revenues. Such an action would have given the business precious little incentive to expand and was abandoned.

Although the MMC is intended to have the final word in disputes there is no legal obligation for the regulator to accept rulings to the letter. Indeed, the Northern Ireland electricity regulator ignored an MMC decision which he did not like.

Regulation is notoriously opaque to the ordinary utility buying person. But when it also interprets rulings by an organisation traditionally regarded as an umpire it is in danger of being unaccountable. Ms Spottiswoode may have finally made a decision that protects customers and rewards shareholders but Labour must ensure that future decisions are not merely the outcome of prolonged scraps.

## A matter of thrust

AS THE excruciatingly named Thrust SSC hurtled through the sound barrier, the rare sound of rejoicing could be heard at BTR. The conglomerate now being honed into a modern engineering combine contributed to both the brakes and the batteries. Unfortunately, it did so in the name of Dunlop and Hawker, so will have done little to boost BTR in investors' perceptions. Cue for a change of corporate identity? Anything but Thrust plc.

## Takeovers win £30m for St Ives

By FRASER NELSON

ST IVES, the printing group, stands to gain up to £30 million this year from the flurry of takeover activity that is expected to dominate the City in the coming months.

The company, which commands 20 per cent of the market for printing takeover documents at short notice, is hoping to win business from Reed Elsevier's merger with Wolters Kluwer and Ladage's hostile bid for Redland.

Miles Emley, chairman, said: "If I had been asked what the corporate printing market was like two days ago, I would have said things were very quiet. This all changed on Monday and we seem to be in the run for some healthy profits ahead."

His comments came as the company returned a pre-tax profit of £48.9 million in the year to August 1, up from £42.2 million in the previous year and exceeding City forecasts. The shares rose 12½p to 532½p.

The results were helped by the expansion of the magazine

market, in which St Ives has a 20 per cent stake, and the increasing number of pages.

Mr Emley said: "The number of pages in magazines is going up by around 5 per cent a month. This is great for us because it is extra revenue at no extra cost: once we've got the original contract, that's it."

The company also won the contract to produce inlays for Elton John's *Candle in the Wind* single, the biggest selling UK record of all time. St Ives is to make a donation, the sum undisclosed, to the Princess of Wales Memorial Fund.

Mr Emley played down the amount that the company could make from the venture. He said: "I don't mean to denigrate this order, but the whole thing would have meant around 20 hours work for one of our smaller printing presses."

Earnings were 33.3p a share (28.7p). The dividend rises to 11.6p with a final 8.2p, due December 3.

Tempos, page 30

## Hamleys looks to Teletubbies

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

HAMLEYS, the toy retailer, is counting on Teletubby and Spice Girl dolls to spark the toy market into life before Christmas.

Howard Dyer, chairman, said the toy market is static, but Hamleys continues to see good sales of Tamagotchi "virtual pets" and Star Wars products. Spice Girls merchandise is selling fast and a new range of dolls is due in November. Teletubby dolls are selling out as soon as they reach the shops and demand is expected to outstrip supply before Christmas.

Pre-tax profit in the half-year to August 2 was down from £2 million to £1.35 million, hit by the cost of buying Toystack and developing the House of Toys concessions in Debenhams department stores. The interim dividend, raised from 3p to 3.3p, will be paid on November 21.

## Receivers called in at motor group

By FRASER NELSON

FORMULA ONE Holdings, the motor racing memorabilia chain that raised £850,000 on the unregulated Oxf exchange just ten months ago, has fallen into receivership.

The group, which had applied for an Alternative Investment Market listing, has collapsed owing undisclosed debts. It has called in KPMG to sell remaining assets.

Tony Thompson, who is overseeing the disposals, said: "Even after the fundraising, they ran out of money and went into receivership last week." The shops will continue to trade until remaining stock is sold. Mr Thompson said: "We have around £500,000 of stock left."

Former advisers to Formula One suggested its exclusive license to sell Damon Hill memorabilia was devalued by the driver's fall in popularity.

## Regal Hotels plans £64m modernisation

By MARTIN BARROW

REGAL HOTELS is raising up to £64 million to modernise its chain of 99 provincial hotels.

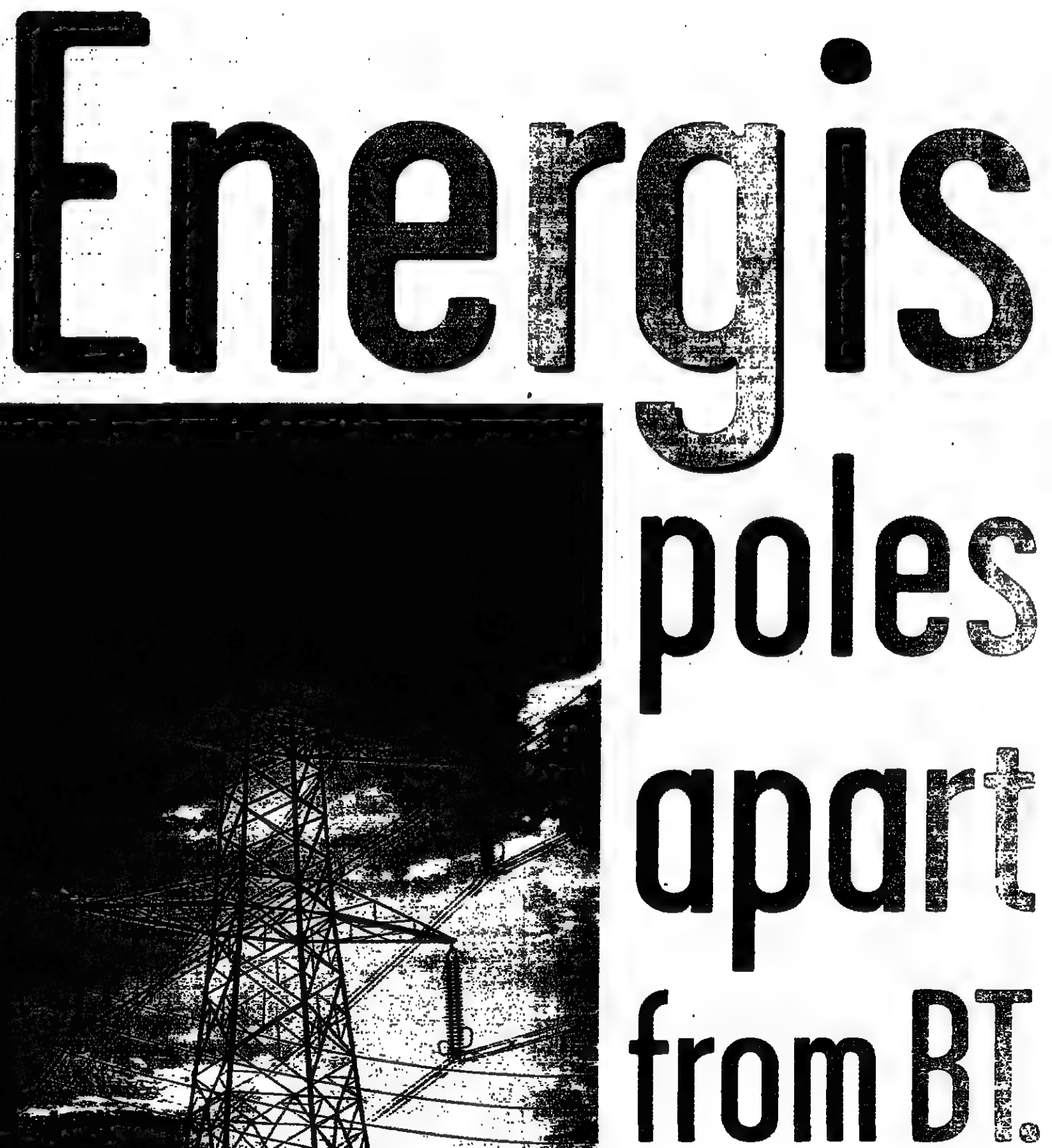
The company plans to spend up to £30 million in the next year refurbishing, and rebranding its hotels, which comprise Forte's old White Hart chain acquired from Granada for £122 million and Whitbread's Country Club hotels, bought for £64.5 million.

A further £11.5 million is to be invested in the acquisition of the 402-bedroom Plaza on Hyde Park. The purchase price is thought to be about £45 million and it will be acquired through a joint ven-

ture with Regent Corporation, an American company linked to Malaysian United Industries. Regal will manage the hotel in return for 10 per cent of operating profits.

Regal has agreed to invest £39.3 million for a 20 per cent interest in Regal at 49.2p per ordinary share and 113p per convertible preference share. There is an open offer of new shares for existing investors.

This is Regal's third fundraising operation in 18 months. Yesterday the shares fell 1p to 46½p, against a 12-month high of 65p struck in February.



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## The time to claim EMU-nity is over

Some 14 months before the probable start of European economic and monetary union, the British Government is leading a serious, open, honest and clear-thinking national debate on the subject. Through the pages of the national press, Robin Cook told the Labour Party conference that Labour's priorities for Britain's presidency of the European Union "arise from the concerns of the people, not the preoccupations of the politicians". And yet all the emphasis seems to be on guessed-at differences of opinion between different power-bases within Government and on reading between the lines of various comments from various officials to discern whether we, as a nation, should/will join the single currency in 1999, shortly thereafter, in 2001, 2002 or beyond.

British businessmen and women hoped, at least, that the incoming Labour Government would not be rendered catatonic by the internal divisions that

prevented any rational discussion of the real issues under the Conservative administration. And yet press speculation has already surfaced — and yesterday fiercely denied — that there is a rift on Europe between the Prime Minister and his Chancellor.

Many businessfolk hoped that Labour would be more Europe-friendly and so it appears to be. Or not. Who knows? All the current sayings and froings may well be a chimera, got up by an over-zealous press and totally unjustified by any actual debate or rumoured change of heart on EMU within the Government.

Whatever is or isn't going on, business is confused. One suspects that many of the people who run British companies are less concerned about whether their Government takes them into a single currency or not than they are by a high and continuing level of

uncertainty. Wise counsel suggests that they should ignore the British dimension of the debate and start preparing themselves for the advent of the euro whether Britain is "in" or "out".

This is easier said than done in the case of, for example, a British high street bank which has to adapt all its procedures for the new currency from payment and settlement systems to its hole-in-the-wall machines. It makes a huge difference to its planning whether the euro is to be a foreign currency, a domestic currency or both simultaneously and on what timescale. Millions could be thrown down the drain if planning is too pre-emptive, too late or of the wrong kind.

Despite the uncertainties, banks and others need to start taking the euro seriously, at least enough to analyse the implications for their businesses of different, alternative



scenarios. Price Waterhouse, which is sponsoring a big conference on EMU and business in London this week, reports an alarming lack of knowledge and even interest in preparing for EMU. Its survey of corporate treasurers recently found that management structures are not in place to look at the implications that British firms, in particular,

are concentrating on the minimum changes needed to operational nuts and bolts, such as IT systems, and have not got round to considering the broader strategic implications for their businesses. Price Waterhouse's Nick Crosby has coined the phrase EMU-nity for the widespread perception among sceptical British companies that EMU will not materially affect them.

There is a perfectly rational argument that the real catalysts for change in Europe's corporate and economic landscape are the single market and increasing global competition and they will be on the scene with or without a single currency. But where this argument has limits is that EMU is already having a profound effect on corporate Europe because European companies believe that it is an important lever for change. Just witness the

batch of huge cross-border mergers announced this week.

One can argue about whether broadening one's geographic spread through big mergers is necessary in a supposedly single market. One might express scepticism about the pursuit of sheer size unless these mergers allow scope for deep cost-cutting (ie, job shedding). One might have doubts about whether many European companies will feel that the climate is right for wrenching structural change of this kind — despite the fact that this is what EMU is supposed to force so usefully upon European business — while host governments are so concerned about mass unemployment.

One can argue about whether EMU will bring greater price competition and an assault on margins and how to cope. One could even argue that British companies, brutally restructured

under Thatcherism and happy denizens of a zone of flexible labour markets, are already well poised to take advantage of fierce price competition in the EMU-zone, in or out.

All these aspects ought to be analysed, whatever the continuing ambiguities (or not) of British policy. Until now, there has been such a hazy sense of unreality about the whole project, particularly in Britain, that managerial Euro-sclerosis has been understandable. If short-sighted. But now that corporate Europe is on the move, there is something concrete for management strategists to get their teeth into. In a regional economy increasingly dominated by multinationals and their dense supplier networks, the euro is coming down supply chains, nearer and nearer to headquarters. Ever larger competitors are even now being created on the Continent. British companies have to think seriously about whether and how to respond. As Gordon Brown has said, the euro has fundamental implications whether Britain is in or out.

## Touch of capitalism helps to stem revolutionary Cuba's decline

The one firm achievement of the regime is up for sale, says Alasdair Murray

Che Guevara, communism's last icon, has finally returned to his revolutionary home. Thirty years after he was shot in Bolivia, he is due to be buried in the central Cuban town of Santa Clara on Friday. The belated return of his body has been accompanied with great pomp and ceremony as Cuba tries desperately to remind its citizens of the virtues of its revolution.

Che still defines the official image Cuba wishes to convey to the world — the tiny island state striving to keep the communist faith in the face of overwhelming hostility from America. But in the tourist shops, Che has taken on a different identity, more capitalist chic than socialist realism. The face that once inspired armchair revolutionaries across the world now adorns t-shirts, baseball caps, berets and even CDs — each available for a few US dollars. In the post-communist world, Cuba is learning that even its heroes have a price.

Cuba was marooned by the collapse of the Eastern bloc after 1989. Its strategic importance to the Soviet Union had ensured a favourable trading relationship. But deprived of its main trading partners, the economy collapsed, a position made desperate by the continuing US economic embargo.

Fidel Castro had no choice but to introduce emergency economic reforms. Small private enterprises were legalised and the country opened up for foreign investment. To curb the black market the US dollar was legalised, resulting in a dual-currency economy.

Most of the Cuban economy remains under state control, but the reform programme has worked sufficiently well to stem the country's decline. In 1996 growth soared to 7.8 per cent and while a poor sugar crop is expected to halve the growth rate this year, the economic



The Cuba of President Castro; right, is proud of Che Guevara, above, who fought in the country's revolution, its world-famous cigars; and its top athletes, including Javier Sotomayor, the world high-jump champion

prospects are viewed as promising enough to attract the attention of a growing number of European and Canadian businesses. Cuba is a compact market of 11 million people that also has the potential to become a low-cost base for exports to the rest of the Caribbean region.

In theory, Cuba should now be enjoying the same kind of investment rush that has followed economic reforms in other communist countries such as China and Vietnam. But US insistence that Cuba remain a pariah country continues to scare off many potential investors. Even major companies with operations in Cuba are sensitive about their position, worried that publicity could create problems in America. BAT Industries returned to Cuba in 1995 after an absence of 35 years, setting a small joint cigarette venture. However, it still refuses to provide any details.

US businesses and individ-

uals are still prevented from travelling to Cuba and Cuban products such as cigars are banned in the US — creating a thriving black market for Cuba's most famous export in fashionable New York bars. But at the root of the problem for foreign investors is the Helms-Burton act, signed into US law last year. This seeks to blacklist foreign companies

investing within the terms of the American law, US competitors have still used Helms-Burton as an excuse to make a fuss. Unilever recently established a joint venture to make toiletries in Cuba. Although Unilever's factory base in the country was built after the revolution, Procter & Gamble highlighted the fact that its Cuban partner still uses one of its former facilities for other activities. Unilever claims the issue has now been resolved, but it remains reluctant to talk too much about Cuba. Not

everyone, however, believes the Helms-Burton Act has proved a major disincentive to trade with Cuba. Peter Scott, chief executive of UK-based Beta Fund, which manages the first dedicated investment fund in Cuba, says: "The Act was intended to make trade more difficult, but, in fact, it has clarified the situation."

Mr Scott is convinced that Cuba has real long-term potential and the impact of Helms-Burton will simply be to allow the bolder non-US firms to steal a lead on American businesses before the embargo comes to an end. "There will be great rewards when the Americans finally return," he says. Post-isolation Cuba has investment opportunities that stretch far beyond its traditional staples of sugar, rum and cigars. The sugar crop still covers a third of Cuba's land mass, but its contribution to foreign earnings has been cut from around 50 per cent of the

total to one fifth. Cuba is reducing its reliance on sugar in favour of other hard-currency earners such as tourism. There were 300,000 visitors in 1996, while 1.2 million are forecast for this year. Earnings from tourism have risen sixfold over the same period to \$1.8 billion. Big operators such as Club Med are returning and foreign investment is helping to restore the country's many imposing hotels. Building work is proceeding at such pace at Varadero, which attracts a third of all visitors to Cuba, that the resort is beginning to resemble a more refined version of the Costa Del Sol.

Ironically, the development of Varadero may be hampered by the fact that the town sits on one of Cuba's other natural assets, oil and gas reserves. Some views from the town have been ruined by the huge gas platform out in the bay, but the best finds are believed to lie immediately under the town. While much of the oil found across Cuba has so far been of too poor quality to use for petrol, Premier, the UK exploration company, is investing heavily in the belief that there could be a billion barrel oil field under the island.

Forty years of communism has inevitably created quirks in the Cuban economy. Basic food and fuel supplies remain a problem, but the country has a highly developed bio-technology industry that is attracting strong interest from overseas investment. York Medical, a Canadian listed biotech company, is in the process of commercialising Cuban products. Beta Gran Caribe, the Cuban investment fund managed by Beta, has taken a stake in York and is also establishing its own biotech company, Biognosis, to sell Cuban bio-tech licences overseas.

Mr Scott says: "Fidel is a bit of a technical buff." "He was very excited by the advent of biotech and sent Cuban scientists abroad to learn the technology and poured in huge resources to develop the sector." The result is that Cuba has an impressive health record with lower infant mortality rates and higher life expectancy than the US. But the communist regime's one firm achievement is now up for sale. Che would be unlikely to approve.

## Expansion the key for turning Bates into a global player

Michael Bungey tells Raymond Snoddy about his plans for the advertising agency

Bates, the international advertising agency, is planning a big expansion campaign once the demerger from Cordiant is complete.

Michael Bungey, at present chief executive of Cordiant Communications Group, who will take control of Bates Worldwide after the split, which is expected to be finalised by mid-December, is planning to turn the agency into a truly global player, while looking at possible acquisitions in the US.

"A wall of fire has been built up within the company. Everyone wants to get going," says Mr Bungey, talking about his future plans for the first time. The first big step would be to use a mixture of cash and shares to take over affiliate agencies in various parts of the world to extend the wholly owned Bates range.

"We intend to expand the geography of our brands. We have a lot of affiliates around the world and we are already in discussions with a number of them, currently with agency in India," says Mr Bungey, who with all the executive directors of Bates and Saatchi & Saatchi, the other half of the demerged Cordiant, could become multi-millionaires if tough performance targets are met over the next three years.

Bates is hoping to create new wholly owned agencies in no less than six Latin American countries — Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Chile and the Argentina. The company already has an agency in Peru. If the plans for Latin America work out then, according to Mr Bungey, Bates would cover 90 per cent of the population of the continent.

A similar expansion is likely for eastern and central Europe. A deal is likely to be considered to transfer Saatchi & Saatchi interests in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, but affiliate negotiations are planned for agencies in Latvia, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. "We are now looking to put

down our marker on a long-term basis to capture more revenue," says Mr Bungey, who argues that his team has been tempered by "the troubles", as they call the row and eventual departure of Charles and Maurice, now Lord Saatchi, from the original Saatchi & Saatchi. Bates took the biggest hit, the loss of the Mars account, although within a year \$500 million of new business had been brought on board.

This year the balance of business gained over business lost has been positive. The losses, Mr Bungey says, have totalled about \$150 million (\$24.4 million) and included Compaq in Europe and Texaco in the US. By the end of August about \$350 million worth of new business had been won, including European, the rental company and CVS, the second largest US drug store company.

Mr Bungey believes that the planned agency purchases will be supported by "a very valuable share price" after the demerger.

The company will also be looking for possible acquisitions in the US. Mr Bungey says that the expansion plans will be spread over the next three years. A further arm of the plan will be a geographical roll-out for Bates marketing services companies, such as 141 and Bates direct marketing. "Everyone's feet are very firmly nailed to the floor and this is a truly global company," says Mr Bungey, who will turn an investment of £150,000 into £2.4 million if all targets are met. For other middle ranking managers an investment of £50,000 could turn into £800,000.

American investors particularly like the incentive scheme. "In fact, a lot of US analysts couldn't conceive of investing in a people business where management is not incentivised," says Mr Bungey, who promises that at the end of the three years a new incentive scheme will be introduced — though possibly different from the present one.



A wall of fire has been built up. Everyone wants to get going? — Michael Bungey

## Pig of a job

OF ALL the tasks presented to Tony Supperstone in his long and illustrious career as an insolvency partner at BDO Stoy Hayward, nothing can quite compare to being asked to sell a Romanian pig farm. The appointment came as a result of the dire financial crisis in the former Warsaw Pact country, which has led to the World Bank calling in a flock of British liquidators to log off anything of value.

Supperstone reckons he pulled the

short straw. Not that there is anything wrong with the farm. It had 40,000 pigs, most of which have now been sold to local farmers. 125 hectares of land and a slaughterhouse. But it does happen to be four hours away from Bucharest. "Romanian cars are uncomfortable at the best of times, and the roads are worse," he tells me. "We always kept being held up by herds of cattle."

After a week on the farm, Supperstone could not believe his luck when he returned to BDO's London offices. The partners' lunch that day was roast pork.

● The mystery of why Nigel Stapleton should have thrived at Read Elsevier when Sir Peter Davis fell foul of the Amsterdam sat deputies. Because I hear that the Labour-leaning knight is an Anglo-Dutch as the company that discarded him. His mother is from Holland.

### Bummer

RELIEF in Halifax after the former building society was cleared of malfeasance by the Advertising Standards Authority, over its adverts, earlier this year, attempting to persuade members to approve the plan to convert into a bank. One poster



featured a crowd at a rock festival at Stonehenge in the 1970s, with a speech bubble coming from the crowd saying: "Be part of something big, man." A Gloucestershire man wrote to the ASA claiming he was the person featured underneath the speech bubble and no-one from the magazine had asked his permission to use his picture and, anyway, he was committed to munality. A world-weary ASA said that it was an old picture and a cartoon speech bubble so he should get with the joke, man.

### Pision sign-off

SO GOODBYE then, Peter Norman, the managing director of Pision UK, the operation which attempts to dis-

tribute the group's hand-held computers to anxious customers. He resigned "by mutual consent" from the group yesterday without a payoff. A spokesman tells me that Norman's operation "was not performing to levels that had been wanted". But Norman's operation was not the one responsible for the production problems that have meant that high-powered executives have been rushing into branches of Dixons brandishing their gold cards in the hope of buying Psion Series 5 computers, only to be told that the gizmos were not available. With David Porter, Psion's founder, firing on all cylinders in his attempts to revive the firm's standing in the City, the speculation among the hand-held techies is that more heads will roll.

● NOT satisfied with irritating BT, WorldCom has set about getting up the nose of Yorkshire folk. In its 1996 annual report the Mississippi-based party pooper boasts a global network of telecom hubs including an Internet server for its UUNET business based in a city it calls "Leads".

### Full Monty

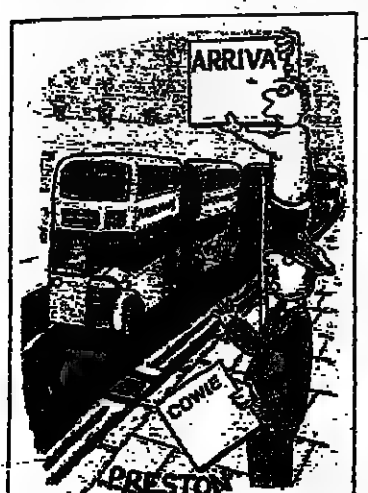
THE executive floor of the Mirror Group offices in Canary Wharf is strangely quiet this week as David Montgomery, the chief executive, has decided to go back to his roots. No, he has not returned to the mean streets of Belfast. The former Daily Mirror

sub-editor is training at the Mirror's "School of Excellence". This educational establishment is teaching hacks at Mirror papers to be "multiskilled" — a concept that means that journalists not only write the stories, but also correct the copy, lay it out, take the pictures, print the paper and drive the delivery vans. Monty has signed up for this week's course, along with staff from The Independent, who are looking forward to quizzing the Ulsterman during tea breaks about rumours that the Mirror wants to sell its 46 per cent stake in the Indy.

JASON NISSE



David Montgomery is getting his knees brown again at school



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TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	99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Nick Edwards introduces a five-page report on purchasing cards — a revolution in the way companies buy low-value items

About 80 per cent of any organisation's purchase orders account for less than 20 per cent of its total spend. The average cost of processing these thousands of transactions — anything between £20 and £60 each — is often more than their individual face value.

The result is a huge administrative bill and busy purchasing staff shuffling paper rather than concentrating on high-value contracts with key suppliers. An increasing number of managers are turning to purchasing cards as a solution.

The cards work in a similar way to consumer charge cards in that the administrative burden is shouldered by the issuing bank. Take the example of a construction company where site foremen will be making hundreds of small purchases each month for tools and materials. By giving each foreman a card, the paper mountain of invoices is replaced by one consolidated bill.

At the same time, the purchasing department can manage spending by putting a few simple controls on the cards, such as a monthly spending limit and restricting use to certain categories. The results can be dramatic: British Aerospace Military Aircraft is saving £500,000 a year with its American Express purchasing cards.

The cards were first used on a large scale by the United States Government in the late 1980s before being taken up by major corporates such as PepsiCo and Hewlett-Packard. They were intro-

## Plastic cuts the cost and prunes the paperwork

duced into the UK about three years ago.

American Express and Visa are the two major players, but customer numbers have only recently begun to take off. Visa claims the market is doubling every three months. About 800 companies now use the cards, most of them with turnovers in excess of £100 million. Big name users include Warner-Lambert, Nuclear Electric, Rank Xerox and the London Stock Exchange.

The basic way the different cards are used does not really vary. The only variation is the levels of management information provided and how fees are charged to the customer. The latter may include a £1 charge on each transaction, a monthly management fee or a percentage of the value of total transactions.

Will Parsons, director of the

Delta Purchasing consultancy, says: "The market is still fluid. The banks are trying different customers. In the past lower interest rates meant the banks could just about cover their costs from supplier fees and user companies could normally avoid any charges. I'm afraid those days are gone."

The developing market and increasing confidence of established users is changing the way cards are being used. For instance, Stefan Forszewska, the consultant for Visa, claims that many companies are increasing the maximum transaction value on their cards from £250 to up to £5,000.

The other major development was the VAT agreement Visa recently signed with HM Customs and Excise. Customs will now accept the information provided by the issuing bank as evidence for VAT reclaim purposes, thus cutting

paperwork and saving time. Purchasing cards also have the potential to change wider purchasing and supply strategies. For instance, the 1990s has seen a drive towards cutting the number of approved suppliers on an organisation's books, sometimes by as much as two thirds, so as to focus management efforts and cut processing costs. Developments in electronic commerce, including card technology, could reverse this trend.

Kim Godwin, operations director of VideoLogic and the new president of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, says: "When you combine the Internet with purchasing cards, it is dynamic. People are only beginning to cotton on to their potential impact on strategies like supplier rationalisation. Suddenly it becomes much simpler and quicker to

search, source and pay from a much wider supply base."

Despite the increasing popularity of purchasing cards, many managers are still wary. The chief concern is that, despite transaction limits and the management information provided by issuing banks, the purchasing department will lose control of spending.

Gary Cheesman, general manager of purchasing at BICC Cables, says: "They are not a system of delegation in their own right, and don't have the right degree of management control. The amount of information that is fed back to you is not enough to support delegated purchasing — I'm sure it is OK on day one, but when you come back in five years and try to make sense of what you had done, you may have problems."

The issue of late payment is important in the success of this technology. Companies are coming under increasing pressure from the Government to alleviate the often crippling effects that payment waiting times in excess of 60 days can have on suppliers, particularly small ones. Visa's Mr Forszewska says: "A number of corporates have indicated that they have great difficulty in paying on time, not because they do not wish to but because their existing systems are just too cumbersome."

In contrast, purchasing cards can guarantee payment in as little as three days.

The author is deputy editor of Supply Management magazine.

### MEET THE SECTOR

ON THURSDAY next week the Government's heads of purchasing, responsible for spending some £60 billion a year, will announce the launch of a purchasing card system. Either Visa or Amex will have won some very big business.

As purchasing cards were developed originally for the US Government, their adoption in Britain is a logical step. There have already been trials at the Department of Social Security, local councils and universities, NHS trusts and even the Veterinary Laboratories Association.

Next week's move will ensure that government departments will develop the use of the cards as part of a drive to improve purchasing which began with the high-profile Setting New Standards procurement White Paper in 1995. That gained further impetus with the arrival this year of former BT procurement director Brian Rigby, as director of the Treasury's cross-governmental Procurement Practice and Development advisory group. "Purchasing cards are something we need," he says. "The reason is simple. It is costing the Government something like £70 to process each invoice and purchasing cards could save £40."

In June the National Audit Office said the cards could help to cut administrative effort by up to a quarter in the Ministry of Defence's £600 million a year spend on routine items. For locally purchased goods the average value was £51, while the process cost was £74. The worst example the NAO came across was a 98p brass padlock which cost 75 times its value to purchase.

The Audit Commission's Goods For Your Health report last November said that process costs in NHS trusts for one in four of all purchases were more than the value of the product. Twenty-four trusts are taking part in purchasing card trials.

At the Department of Social Security a six-month trial began last year but no system has yet been implemented. Although cards reduced transaction costs by a fifth, the benefits were reduced because the purchasing processes were sometimes poor. "The real opportunity comes when you can re-engineer the process and use purchasing cards as part of that," said a project team member.

The problem for the public sector will be to square lower process costs with the need to demonstrate propriety.

## Visa Purchasing

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# Licence to fly through the red tape barrier

Few promises are more attractive to businesses than this: we will cut your VAT paperwork. Now American Express and Visa have given that pledge with their purchasing cards, and the system could spread throughout the European Union.

Winning approval from Customs and Excise does not come easy. Amex took six months to convince the VAT authorities that its card was safe, reliable and accurate and would provide sufficient information. Visa has taken a year to win approval for its card.

Amex led the way when it launched its corporate purchasing card in the UK in 1995. Blue-chip companies using the card include British Aerospace, Conoco and Warner Lambert. With VAT paperwork reduced, it is claimed that administration and overhead costs can be cut by 50 to 70 per cent. It has spread the types of purchases that can be made, and the list now includes engineering and electrical supplies, freight, couriers, printing and design, stationery, office supplies and computers.

Anglian Water, which uses a Visa purchasing card, says: "We consolidate thousands of VAT invoices each month. The use of monthly management reports as proof of VAT purchases will dramatically reduce our workload."

David Knowles, head of American Express Purchasing Card

**After a long wait, Visa printouts can now be used to reclaim VAT. Rodney Hobson looks at the breakthrough**

Europe, says: "Over the past two years we have established a comprehensive supplier base of more than 600 suppliers in the UK. We were the first to offer full Customs and Excise approval for reclaiming VAT, which is essential in the battle to eliminate costly paperwork, and our line-item detail on statements ensures comprehensive management control."

So, given that Customs and Excise had already approved one card, why has it taken until July this year for Visa to persuade the authorities that its systems can produce VAT information as reliably as a paper invoice? Indeed, as long ago as last October approval was said to be imminent.

That delay has certainly slowed down the use of Visa cards, since many purchasing managers have been reluctant to adopt them without the bonus of being VAT-compliant.

Visa's Stefan Forszewski says: "We have taken a little longer because Visa developed a different strategy. The greatest demand from companies is that our card

should have the widest acceptance, so we wanted to have as many suppliers as possible accepting it. We wanted suppliers with less sophisticated systems to be able to participate."

"We developed a two-tier solution that could deliver full data but which also enabled smaller suppliers with systems producing less information to join in."

The dual system allows suppliers to choose between providing a copy similar to a paper invoice or a summary including VAT number, a commodity code, the VAT rate and the amount charged.

The simpler system is suitable for small suppliers with relatively few customers, while those dealing in large volumes can opt for a sophisticated sales ledger system. Stuart Fisher, head of Barclays purchasing card division, says another reason why trials took so long is that several card issuers were involved. High street banks such as NatWest, Midland and Lloyds TSB took part in the trials and have subsequently issued VAT-compliant Visa purchasing cards.

Mr Fisher says: "It took a long time because extended trials included a large number of suppliers, Visa customers and banks. There were so many involved that it was difficult to get everybody in line. If it had been just Barclays, I am sure we would have got approval in six months, but because so many banks were involved and we were using an open system, it was difficult tying it all together."

"Establishing a system that suits everyone was important, though, because as the number of electronic terminals and data systems grows, more transactions will be VAT-compliant."

Mr Forszewski says that delay in gaining approval did not reflect a lack of enthusiasm on the part of Customs and Excise. "It was keen on the idea because it will make its audit process far simpler. They will not have to review so many pieces of paper to obtain evidence of VAT claims. A single document from the bank will match what is coming from the suppliers."

The next move is into Europe. Amex has just launched its corporate purchasing card in France, Germany and Sweden. The European operations centre is in the UK, with support from local teams on the Continent.

Mr Knowles says: "Our multinational clients in these key European markets are crying out for a similar system, and the time is ripe for us to develop the product further."



Corporate card purchases now include freight and couriers, printing, stationery and computers

## Giving power to the people on the ground



Companies can easily monitor spending through cards

One of the biggest myths about purchasing cards is that they will cause companies to lose control of their spending.

But the whole reasoning behind purchasing cards is that buying departments should rid themselves of the burdens of chasing paper connected with high volumes of low-value orders.

This change has to mean that non-purchasing staff take on responsibility for buying items they need in their everyday jobs. It also means that companies must trust their staff and implement their purchasing card programmes with thorough communication and training and clear guidelines.

"Purchasing cards actually involve a culture change for the company. If it believes that people are not to be trusted and will exploit it at every opportunity, then the company will too often put in too many controls and purchasing cards will not work," says Adam Hubbard, senior purchasing manager of Nortel's Enterprise Networks Europe. This has not been a problem for Nortel, where Hubbard led the introduction of purchasing cards in 1993 and is currently looking at how card use can be spread out across Europe.

The clear opinion of many purchasers is that the control issue is a perceived problem and that companies actually get better visibility of spending through purchasing cards than through existing systems.

If a company has concerns, there are a couple of simple ways to gauge the level of controls already in place. How many invoices does it process which do not have an associated purchase order attached to them, and how many invoices does it receive which mismatch first time?

Invoice mismatching is widespread and it is not uncommon for 30 to 50 per cent of low-value invoices to require rework, while the number of invoices processed without an associated purchase order varies dramatically from company to company. For many purchasers the

inherent checks in purchasing cards are enough. These include individual and monthly spending limits, the ability to block certain supply sectors and the monthly breakdown by bank of how much each cardholder is spending and where.

Individual spending limits put a ceiling on the value of what can be bought at any one time, while the monthly limit blocks card use when those individual transactions reach a certain level.

These limits are up to each company using purchasing cards, but typically they start out with transaction limits of around £250, rising quickly to £500 and hitting £1,000 after programmes have been in place for several months. But they can be higher.

One company even allowed a one-off purchase for a direct mail to a £30,000 transaction. Monthly limits tend to be set between £1,000 and £5,000.

A useful feature is the ability to block certain supply groups in a card so that it can not be used to buy goods from companies in particular. Standard Industrial Classification codes. But this is not always as helpful as it first appears. The code groupings can be too general and if used can block out a company where card users want to make a valid purchase. Some companies may block out some retail usage, but for example, that could mean building workers being unable to buy an urgently needed bag of cement from B&Q.

"We have an approved supplier list and people have to justify their actions if they buy from somewhere else," says Alan Barclay, purchasing manager for London Electricity. "If there is a genuine need to go elsewhere, who are we to say who they should use?"

A popular example from another company is someone who was quizzed about an item bought from Toys R Us. The item turned out to be a toner cartridge, bought from the toy store because it was the cheapest option. Although industry codes can be blocked, individual suppliers can not.

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Tony Dawe on a system that puts companies in charge of their own destinies by showing exactly what has been spent and by whom

## How much data does a manager really need?

The great debate about purchasing cards is whether they enable major companies to maintain tight financial controls. Purchasing managers can decide who should have the cards and set credit limits, but many fear control of the cards will be much looser than the computerised purchasing systems installed at great expense.

The organisations issuing the cards insist, however, that the management reports they send out every month provide more than enough information to show managers exactly how their budget is being spent and by whom.

David Knowles, UK head of purchasing cards for American Express, says: "Companies find it is only when they investigate the purchasing process that they see the improvements that can be made. Those that implement our system can see electronically exactly who has spent what and where; current paper-based purchasing systems don't allow this."

The Amex management report begins by listing each cardholder and the amount spent with which

### MANAGEMENT REPORTING

supplier. The report lists every group of items purchased: "Five ink pads, £11.35; three presentation binders, £21.24; one dictionary, £4.11..."

"We took this line item detail approach from the start because the information is useful for the user and the company and gives them a 'comfort factor'," says Mary Gelder, Amex marketing manager for corporate purchasing cards.

The report then offers information on each supplier, providing the address and VAT number and listing all the items purchased from the company by all cardholders. This can be particularly useful for purchasing managers because it means they can negotiate bulk discounts if they find some suppliers are providing lots of small items to several departments.

The report can also group purchases by merchant category so that managers can see how much has been spent, for example, on catering, travel, office and mechanical equipment.

"Customers are also provided with a flexible management tool, which they can use to integrate the data," adds Mr Knowles. "While purchasing managers will not necessarily trawl through the data every month, they have a mine of information for analysis."

Severn Trent Water has evolved its own computer software to administer its Barclaycard purchasing cards. "We take the management data over the Internet, download it and configure it so it merges with information on our existing data base to give us an overall view of everything we are spending," says Martyn Mellors, payment processing manager.

"The software allows us to turn the information inside out. It helps us target suppliers with whom we should be renegotiating and profiles cardholders with high, medium and low usage."

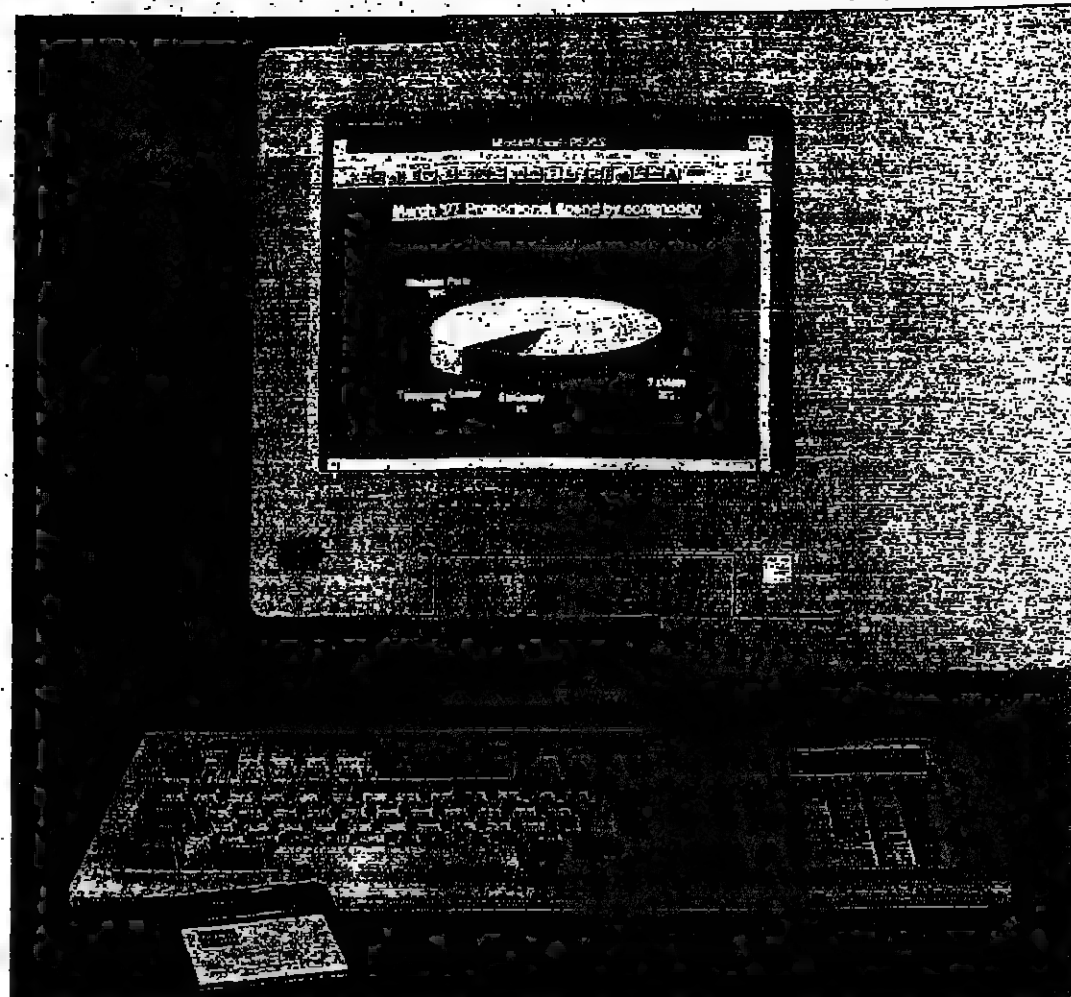
Ian Wollam, purchasing director at Tarmac Civil Engineering, adds: "We get much more detail from NatWest about purchasing card

spending than we could ever achieve ourselves without putting in a lot of effort."

"We are also finding that an increasing number of national suppliers are prepared to use the card to trade with us. They see the advantages of allowing the bank to handle transaction costs."

Will Parsons, director of Delta Purchasing, a specialist consultancy, says management reports provide managers with more than they need, but not as much as they want. "Managers are uneasy about fraud and about inexperienced cardholders going wild. They face a conflict between simplifying the purchasing process and letting go of the controls. So they ask for lots and lots of information they don't need because the purchases are low value and low risk."

He adds that the merchant category groupings in management reports can also be flawed. "If an engineer with a purchasing card goes round to B&Q or Homebase to buy a spanner, the information might end up being listed under retailing... gardening... electrical goods or even decorating."



Figures at your fingertips: the American Express purchasing card shows where the money goes

## Financial Director

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## Making the most of size and muscle

Some of the UK's biggest organisations have been at the forefront in implementing purchasing card systems and the issuing banks have traditionally aimed their product at major corporate customers.

Stefan Forsyth, a consultant for Visa, says this is because the larger the company, the more complex and bureaucratic the existing systems and controls tend to be - hence the greater effect cards will have. "Realistically, organisations with under £20 to £30 million turnover need to be looking for a different solution."

Certainly awareness of the issues is higher in larger companies. A survey of purchasing departments by Company Barclaycard for *Supply Management* magazine found that two-thirds of £100 million-plus companies thought they spent too much time on low-value orders, compared with an overall figure of 25 per cent. Part of the

awareness issue lies in the fact that larger companies tend to have senior purchasing managers with experience of wider business strategies and the influence to change company-wide systems.

Over and above greater recognition, it can be argued that larger companies are better placed to introduce purchasing cards. First, they have the purchasing muscle to force smaller suppliers to invest in the necessary technology. Second, they tend to have much greater internal resources for training card users, often a much underestimated concern. Third, they see the obvious potential of downsizing savings - a 20-person buying department might be cut in half by a large-scale card system.

However, Will Parsons, director of Delta Purchasing

consultancy, says smaller companies are beginning to enter the market although it is taking longer than anyone predicted. "There is still a lack of awareness and some scepticism," he says. "However, once the cards are in place, it doesn't take the company long to make a difference in the way they are used or the benefits achieved."

He says the supplier compliance problem is at least partially offset by the fact that smaller companies make many low value orders from national retailers - many of which already accept purchasing cards.

One smaller organisation which has successfully introduced purchasing cards is the Crispin and Borst construction group, with a turnover of £46 million. Although it has only about 200 "frontline

workers, 150 NatWest cards are currently in use with an expected total transaction value of about £1 million a year. Group purchasing manager Ian Carr says the need for streamlining low value orders was clear: of 20,000 purchases last year, 17,500 were for under £250.

The considerable time Mr Carr has put into training internal users and selling the concept to suppliers is now paying off. Average low-value transaction costs have been cut from £25 to less than £4. He has also cut the purchasing department in half over the past 12 months while improving overall performance.

"We are becoming a proactive purchasing department. I'm using the cards to create time so that we can concentrate on the larger capital spends. I don't want buyers spending time buying nails when they are an off-the-shelf item. The people who use them should be buying them."

NICK EDWARDS



Big companies can cut time wasted on small orders



## Rodney Hobson looks at how cards can help to combat invoice fraud

As card issuers and fraudsters fight a relentless battle over the misuse of personal credit cards, the issue of security looks as if it must be a double-edged sword as it comes to company purchasing cards. Not only can they be stolen, but they are also open to abuse by the employees who are entrusted with them.

Yet the banks who supply the cards and the companies that use them claim that of all forms of plastic money, company cards are the least prone to crime.

Paul Owen is chairman of the purchasing card committee of the Low Value Order Group, an organisation of companies that monitors the buying of low-cost items. He sees the issue from the sharp end.

"We are satisfied that a lot of features in the card regarding security are OK," he says. "Using them is no different to the way that a credit card would be used over the telephone. It is an area that we have debated and some companies are concerned over the possible fraudulent use of the purchasing cards."

"Those taking a more enlightened view are empowering employees to use the cards but spelling out that it is a serious offence if the card is misused. If it is lost it has got to be reported straight away."

Stuart Forsyth, at Visa, says: "The experience of purchasing cards in the United Kingdom and in the United States is that the level of fraud is the lowest of any card product."

"The issue and use of purchasing cards appears to be very carefully

## Keeping a firm finger on crime

controlled by the firms and the card users. Employees who are trusted with the cards often have responsible jobs and are at a sufficiently high level to have loyalty to their employers.

"Employees could start spending money they are not supposed to, but on the whole it has not happened. It is usually made clear to them that if they are caught misusing the card they are liable to dismissal or at least they will have their card withdrawn."

"Companies tend to be very restrictive in who they issue cards to and they make sure that they go to the right people in the organisation."

Stuart Fisher, purchasing card head at Barclaycard, agrees. "Initially, security against misuse and theft are high on the agenda with

potential users," he says, "but once they have got programmes up and running, security gets relegated to almost not being an issue. Companies have controls to keep an eye on the use of the cards and even if they don't auditors certainly do."

"Only a very small percentage of cards are stolen because they tend not to be carried around. Orders and account numbers tend to be quoted over the telephone."

Two specific ways in which the use of purchasing cards can be restricted are putting a spending limit on a card and specifying what types of merchandise can be bought with it.

Mr Forsyth says: "What a cardholder is allowed to use the card for may reflect his or her responsibilities and authority in management. There can be a limit

on every single transaction. A maintenance fitter may be allowed £100 or £200 while someone in the purchasing department is allowed up to £5,000. There can also be a monthly spending limit of, say £2,000 for the fitter and £50,000 for the purchasing department."

"The company might want to ban spending on hotels, airlines, restaurants or car hire. These can be blocked. There is a greater control on the purchasing card over and above that for other types of card."

Visa cites the example of a company that found its purchasing card was being used at an Audi garage. This seemed odd to the managers because the company had no Audis.

In fact, the purchasing card had uncovered a fraud that had been going on for ten years. The employee had been running a private business and buying parts with his employer's money.

Mr Fisher points out that whatever purchasing system a company uses there can be fraud. He points out that even with a paper system orders are often made over the phone, goods are delivered and the paperwork comes later, giving more scope for abuse.

It, despite all the assurances, companies are still worried about security, they can buy peace of mind. Banks issuing Visa purchase cards offer liability waiver insurance against lost cards or misuse of cards by employees.

## ARROW BUSINESS SYSTEMS: CARDS CUT OUR COSTS



Derek Hardy at Arrow: "Offered benefits for both parties."

ARROW Business Systems had less than a month to crack into action after one of its most important customers announced that it wanted to pay for all its stationery by Visa purchasing card.

The Luton-based stationery company had been accepting payment by Visa cards since the late Eighties, but transactions involving Visa payment had been few and far between.

"It was almost by accident that we came across the system. Although there was no explicit pressure on us to go down this route, we realised very quickly that what they were proposing offered major benefits for both parties," says Derek Hardy at Arrow. With the help of Barclays Merchant Services, Arrow installed a payment system.

Mr Hardy believes it "enhances levels of service to the customer and has enabled us and our customers to reduce administrative costs." Currently the company is dealing with 500 to 600 transactions a month with a value of £30,000.

"You have to be very customer-focused these days," he says. "It was a route we had to go down. Card suppliers don't operate the system for nothing, but we can pay. It's a competitive business that we are in and it is our job to keep the price down for the customer."

## How BOC set the trend that others follow

In the chargecard hall of fame, the name of Trevor Rock is framed in gold. As materials manager at BOC Gases, it was he who first suggested to the company's bankers that they should experiment with purchasing cards, thus setting the trend for Britain's large corporations.

In the early 1990s a study found that almost two thirds of BOC's requisitions were items costing less than £250 — vehicle spares, stationery, small tools, business-related newspapers and so forth. Together, they represented only 3.3 per cent of total expenditure, but they were clearly very costly to process.

Mr Rock set himself the task of reducing the cost. He looked at various changes to the system. He dabbled with three-part local purchase orders, photocopied handwritten requisitions, a daily logbook, even verbal orders with no formal purchase order. Every method threw up reams of invoices.

Eventually, he approached Company Barclaycard about purchasing cards, which had already become established in America. In August 1991 a steering group met for the first time. On it sat representatives from a BOC branch and from four departments purchasing, finance, IT and quality assurance.

Cardholders, requisitioners, branch managers, supervisors and invoice-matchers were trained and issued with booklets detailing the process. Feedback sessions were arranged. The job of getting the suppliers onside began, with letters from Company Barclaycard doing the explaining and BOC the persuading. And in January 1992 the scheme began at two sites.

Five years later the cards are "embedded in the culture of the company," says Ted Dwyer, the current materials manager, based in Guildford. "There are 460 cardholders in 90 UK locations, ordering goods worth £8 million a year, and we've rolled out the concept to South Africa, America, Australia and shortly the North Pacific." For his vision, Mr Rock won the BOC Group Innovation Award.

"Take garage spares," Mr Dwyer says. "The garage foreman will have a procurement card, as we call them. If he wants a part, he rings up his local spares dealer, orders the part on the phone, gives the dealer his card number, and the part will be delivered. At the end of month, a statement goes to his manager. He distributes a copy

to the foreman, who checks it. Then it goes through to be paid. At the moment, there's still some paperwork because of VAT. But the new card should overcome that, now that there's an agreement with Customs and Excise."

"When we started, cardholders had a £250 limit. Now confidence has grown and it's between £500 and £1,000. Selected people will have their top limit increased."

The front-end purchasing side has certainly been simplified. The staff feel more responsible — they've been empowered, to use the jargon. On transaction costs, however, savings have been made. The initial target of £200,000 a year "has been obviously saved, plus postage and stationery. Suppliers are paid quicker. It's an enabler."

When the pilot began there were fears about spend analysis, lack of management control, potential abuse of the system and an adverse cashflow effect. These fears proved groundless, Mr Dwyer says. The monthly reports from Company Barclaycard separate ordered items into 30 categories. Lack of management control has not proved a problem. Negotiations with Company Barclaycard have overcome the cashflow problem. And fraud? "Well, nobody has booked a holiday on the card so far," he says.

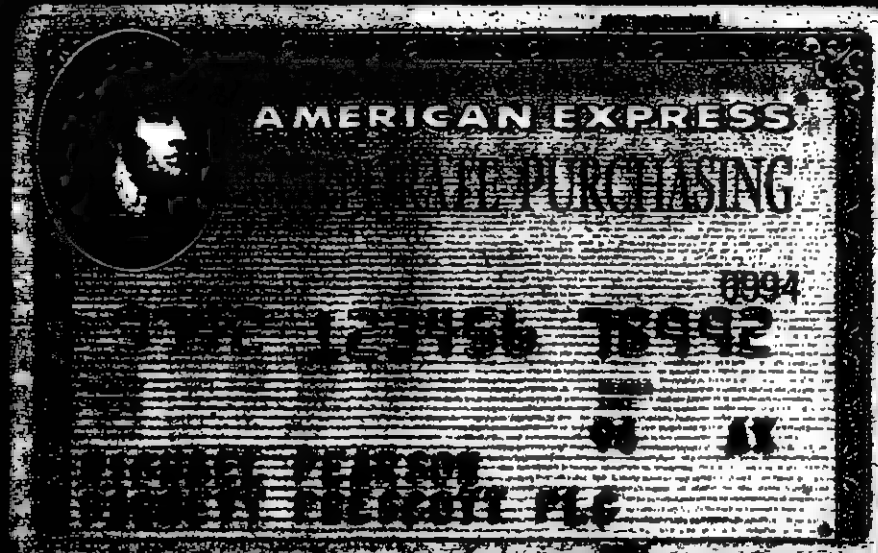
On the debit side, he concedes that some suppliers are unhappy about paying banks a fee. Some are waiting to see whether other customers take the card route before signing up. With these suppliers BOC uses alternative methods — a monthly order agreement, for example. Some transactions are done by EDI (electronic data interchange). Some suppliers submit a disk which is downloaded straight into BOC's general ledger.

"We did try using a Visa number on the Internet," Mr Dwyer says. "The interfaces weren't there, but when those problems are solved, it will add another dimension to purchasing."

BOC's policy has been to concentrate on the top 20 per cent of its active suppliers. The shared experience of being pioneers has in itself cemented relationships, Mr Dwyer says.

"I'm sure it will spread. Purchasing cards in industry will become as common as credit cards in the high street. You wouldn't go out without one, would you?"

PETER BROWN



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Training is the key to success in big companies, says Tony Dawe, while Morag Preston looks at the experiences of three small suppliers

# Conquering fear and loathing in the office

From Britain's biggest aircraft manufacturer and prominent water company to chicken farmers and suppliers of lorry parts, the purchasing card is becoming part of everyday life.

Cards are now given to fitters and flight engineers, salesmen and roadbuilders, allowing them to order essential low-cost components by telephone or fax without delay and a mountain of paperwork.

This purchasing revolution has, for the most part, brought morale-boosting responsibility to blue-collar workers on the shopfloor and representatives out on the road. But it has also caused resentment. Some managers fear their power has been undermined by allowing more junior members of staff to place orders, while clerks in accounts and purchasing departments could hardly be expected to welcome an upheaval that will cost many their jobs. Even some cardholders have been concerned at their new responsibilities.

Seven Trent Water, which has handed out 750 Company Barclaycard in the past year, has encountered some difficulties. "Some

## SETTING UP

managers insisted that they should have cards because they had always been the keepers of the order book for low-value purchases," Martyn Mellors, payment processing manager, says.

"But we decided that it was the people who were doing the business over the phone with suppliers who needed the cards. At the outset, some of them were worried about the implications of being a cardholder. They didn't appreciate that it was an issue of corporate accountability and not a personal one. They were also worried about being landed with a workload that had always been carried out by the purchasing department."

Most problems were resolved at training sessions, supported by Barclaycard. "When we asked for the cards back at the end of a pilot scheme in 1995, they were not returned willingly," Mr Mellors adds.

The whole process has been driven by the number of low-value transactions in the business. "They amount to 3 per cent of our spend but 60 per cent of the volume," he

says. "We were looking for economies, and purchasing cards was one measure that would help to reduce manpower."

The company has now delegated some £5 million worth of purchasing to local spending officers in departments such as transport, human resources, facilities management and field maintenance. They can use the cards to purchase items costing up to £1,000, plus VAT, and their monthly credit limits range from £2,000 to tens of thousands, depending on what they are doing for the company.

Staff in the training department can use their cards to book courses at hotels and buy textbooks, fitters in the transport department can order spare parts and even the company librarian has a card.

Potential problems caused by the cards were ironed out at British Aerospace's military aircraft division by numerous "awareness sessions" and by leaving managers with some responsibility.

"Together with our chosen partner, American Express, we took staff through the old process and then explained how the purchasing cards would work and how the information they provided would



Elaine and David Brown at CVS Gâtwick: "Cards remove the worry and uncertainty," Elaine says

put us more in charge of our own destiny," Chris Hinde, purchasing business manager, says.

"They realised it would make the purchasing process more streamlined. We have had a good 'buy-to' from many of our 500 departments, which can use the cards for

components costing up to £2,000."

The company ensured that managers with budget responsibilities received a card and encouraged them to nominate two or three other cardholders to make purchases in their departments. With 800 cardholders now

spending £1.8 million a month on Amex purchasing cards, the BAE division has become one of the biggest players in the field and expects the use of the cards to spread throughout the company.

The introduction of the cards in smaller firms such as Sun Valley

Poultry, of Hereford, and CVS Gâtwick, a commercial vehicle spares distributor, has proved equally effective.

"We have been delighted with this new system of payment," says Elaine Brown of CVS. "It is easy and quick. It ensures we receive payment within a few days of the transaction taking place. It is administratively efficient and it removes the worry and uncertainty of dealing with customers unknown to the company."

At Tarmac Civil Engineering, Ian Wollam, purchasing director, admitted that the introduction of NatWest purchasing cards has received "a mixed reception", with resentment among some staff at carrying out the purchasing department's function.

"We had to train staff, but that was a good thing as everyone should be aware of the cost of materials," Mr Wollam says. "There is now a greater acceptance that this is the sensible thing to do and that empowering people to use the cards gives them personal control over what we spend."

The company has issued 150 cards so far, with spending limits ranging from £100 for staff with no previous purchasing experience to £5,000 for some managers.

Mr Wollam also identifies one more potential problem. "We recognised that we would be paying the banks sooner than we had paid suppliers. But even then, the system is better because of the savings achieved by cutting paperwork, the improved relationship with the suppliers and the opportunities for making better use of the budget."

## KELLY SERVICES: WE ALL WIN

MIDLAND Bank provided Kelly Services with a memorable pilot for its purchase card system. The bank, a user of the system and a familiar client of the employment agency, paid for the hiring of temporary staff with the card.

"If we can provide top-rate committed staff, an easy ordering system and payment process, then everyone wins all round," says Stephen Segel, financial controller at Kelly Services. "Our clients benefit because they have greater control over expenditure and we do not have to chase our clients' accounts departments."

Mr Segel did have his doubts when Kelly Services

started a purchasing card system almost two years ago. "Not as many people were aware of the purchase card payment cycle at that time. But now we are getting a lot more questions from customers, asking how it works."

"On the subject of costs the benefits have to be weighed up against financing costs. We felt it was an advantage, so we went for it."

Glenn Forde at Midland Card Services says: "Kelly Services now sends us an itemised bill rather than lots of individual invoices. This avoids us having to worry about whether we could be paying for the same temp twice."



Neil Sexton: "We are paid within three or four days"

TWENTY months ago, Neil Sexton, who runs a variety of transport services from Limousine hire to the delivery of frozen vegetables, was looking for a quicker and more cost-effective way for customers to settle their accounts.

With the help of Barclays Merchant Services, a purchase card terminal was installed at Tom's Cars, the family firm in Hereford.

Mr Sexton says: "The majority of our business customers settle their accounts every two months. When one of our customers asked us to accept Visa purchasing cards I was sceptical. When someone tells you that you're going to lose about 2 per cent of everything you earn, that's

a lot. But with hindsight we worked out that our overdraft was costing us more. "Since then we have been told that if we decrease the number of transactions we put through — perhaps weekly rather than daily — it will cost us less."

The company now receives authorisation within minutes, and employees do not have to spend time writing out paper vouchers.

"It means we are paid within three or four working days," Mr Sexton says, "rather than having to wait months."

"It has improved our cash-flow by as much as £15,000 a month. We have been able to invest this money and improve the services we can offer."

## SHEPHERD & CO: BRILLIANT IDEA

IT WAS a request from Glaxo Wellcome that persuaded Shepherd & Co to adopt the Visa purchasing system. The outcome is a stronger business relationship between the pharmaceutical giant and the Darlington-based company, which supplies fruit and vegetables to caterers.

Shepherd & Co, which has a £750,000 annual turnover and employs a staff of 15, signed up to accept the Visa purchasing system in 1995. The issuing bank was NatWest. "Our decision was principally customer-led," says Kathryn Shepherd, a director. "It helps us to offer a technologically advanced service to our customers and also to give

us an edge when competing for new business. It's a brilliant idea — why no one came up with it before, I don't know."

But Mrs Shepherd is surprised that the cost of the scheme falls upon "the people who the banks are trying to get to use it."

She says: "I suppose they are trying to cover their costs, but it does seem a bit short-sighted. Not a lot of our customers are interested in using it at the moment, but we hope that will improve. I don't think enough people know about it yet — when you mention it to firms, they haven't a clue. But it is the way of the future, and it is a clean way of doing things."

# Do purchasing managers have any idea?

IDEA  
of the year  
AWARDS

Real change and sustained improvement are created through innovation, not imitation. On 20 October Supply Management magazine launches the "Idea of the Year awards", in association with Company Barclaycard. The aim is to find and reward the best business ideas from purchasing, supply and logistics professionals — the ones which have really made the difference.

For more details on the awards and how to enter, call Nick Edwards on 0171 880 6242.



Supply Management



# This is my island in the frame

Chris Blackwell is now doing for Jamaican film what he did for the island's music, says Nigel Williamson

In an illustrious career spanning almost 40 years, Chris Blackwell is as excited about his film *Dancehall Queen* as about anything with which he has ever been involved. He believes the film heralds both a revolutionary development technologically and a quantum leap culturally for the Jamaican film industry.

These are bold claims from a man whose name is synonymous with Jamaican culture, and particularly with its export to the rest of the world. Through his Island Records label, Blackwell was almost single-handedly responsible for introducing an unsuspecting world to the sounds of ska and rocksteady, the definitive Jamaican beats of the 1960s which caused a musical revolution. He discovered Bob Marley and tirelessly promoted reggae until it became one of popular music's most ubiquitous rhythms.

"For a tiny island with a population of two and a half million Jamaica's cultural influence around the globe is remarkable," he says. Indeed it is, but without Blackwell's entrepreneurial vision the probability is that Jamaican culture would never have filtered much beyond the diaspora of the world's Afro-Caribbean communities.

Now, with his new company Island Jamaica Films, Blackwell plans to do for the indigenous film industry what he has already done for Jamaican music. *Dancehall Queen* is not Blackwell's first venture into film — he was also behind the Academy Award-winning *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, among others, and 25 years ago his *The Harder They Come* starring the Jamaican singer Jimmy Cliff became a cult classic. Yet his latest cinematic venture holds a special place in his heart, for two reasons.

Relating over dinner at his Strawberry Hill compound, one of the world's great luxury hotels for the Blue Mountains



Chris Blackwell in Jamaica: "The new technology with digital cameras does for film what the compact disc did for audio. It represents the democratisation of film-making"

high above Kingston, Blackwell (who also owns Goldeneye, the former Jamaican home of Ian Fleming) explains that he believes we are witnessing a revolution in film-making.

"It feels like a beginning. This film is the first to be shot on digital video cameras. That means it cost us about \$400,000, whereas a low-budget movie in Hollywood terms these days costs between \$10 million and \$20 million. This technology does for film what the compact disc did for audio. Digital cameras allow you to use two or three cameras on

every shot from different angles. It's the democratisation of film-making and it also means we can produce direct for the home market so that you just plug it in to your television and speakers. We can start selling movies like CDs." The new cameras make the film a perfect fit with the newly developed DVD format, which unlike normal video means no loss of sonic or visual quality.

The second reason for Blackwell's enthusiasm is the raw drama and vibrant passion that comes from every frame of *Dancehall Queen*. "My roots are all Jamaican

and I feel its culture is a unique export. This film is a portrait of life on the streets of Kingston. It's the very real story of an incredibly strong woman battling against the odds in a male-dominated culture and triumphing."

For that reason Blackwell has refused all demands from distributors to provide subtitles for some of the film's stronger patois. "It is a Jamaican film and subtitles would be patronising. We are not going to compromise the spirit of the film like that."

The decision is surely the right one: *Dancehall Queen* combines a rich balance of

menace and street humour, revolving around a struggling single mother financially dependent on a rich "uncle" intent on sexually abusing her young daughter. Her bid for financial independence and personal freedom involves moonlighting in Kingston's top clubs to win the title of "dancehall queen" by dressing in outrageous costumes and performing sexually provocative dances to the latest Jamaican sounds.

The performance by Audrey Reed in the title role is riveting. "I think all the acting is fantastic but Audrey is particularly great," says Blackwell.

"When she tries to change her life the audience really cares about her. The music emphasises the moods to make it all larger than life. Jamaica is like that."

Some have likened the film to a Jamaican *Saturday Night Fever* and the dancehall phenomenon, now imported to Britain where it has a strong following among the Afro-Caribbean community, has excited academic debate at the University of the West Indies about whether its blatant sexuality is a further example of the exploitation of women, or the instrument of their liberation. Indeed, the pulsing dancehall beat of Kingston club culture, with its bumpy grind "lacks" which forms the musical backdrop of the film, is a long way from the spiritual sounds of Marley.

But, insists Blackwell, it is still in the best traditions of reggae's glory days. "This music has a great attitude. There is an unrelenting individuality and that comes out in the music. Think of the bossa

nova. That was a rhythm that became decent very quickly. It was soft and ambient and parents liked it. Jamaican music has always avoided that; it has broken its own boundaries and retained its rebelliousness."

To direct the film Blackwell brought in Don Letts and Rick Elgood, two British-based Rastafarians. They recruited many actors literally off the streets of Kingston. "Part of the philosophy was to begin putting back into Jamaica what so many people have taken out," says Letts. *Dancehall Queen* is not a smooth-talking, glossy Hollywood epic but it possesses the beat of the street and a heart that the big studios seem unable to capture. The film, Blackwell promises, is the first of a series which will highlight Jamaican culture. "I hope we can make about two a year. Jamaica has never lacked the talent. Now we have the means."

● *Dancehall Queen* is on general release. The soundtrack is available now on Island

## Three men in a beat

Every so often a tenor saxophonist comes along who rewrites the rules about jazz improvisation and composition. Since his 1991 *Figure of Speech* album, Elery Eskelin has been on the list of such players, and the final date of his first UK tour showed that the buzz of excitement among the cognoscenti was more than justified.

His roots are in the blues-based organ and tenor sounds of the 1960s, and occasionally he lets rip with gutsy blues playing over one of his characteristically dense vamped backgrounds, but more often he exploits newer, more daring territory.

His current trio draws together two lines of recent exploration, unorthodox instrumentation and asymmet-

JAZZ

Elery Eskelin  
Vortex

rical compositions in which thematic material is linked by free passages or stark rhythmic and textural contrasts. The title track of their recent album *One Great Day*, which doubled as their opening number, exemplified how successfully ideas have been worked through. Andrea Perkins's accordion, keyboard and sampling varied the timbre as effectively as Jim Black's virtuoso drumming.

From his tour here earlier this year with Tim Berne's Bloodcount, it was obvious that Black has become one of New York's most creative percussionists, and Eskelin's trio offers him a perfect forum for his eclectic playing. Snatches of drum 'n' bass weave seamlessly into hard-edged rock-styled rhythms; shakers, gourds and brittle cymbal effects jostle with the conventional drum kit, yet a basic jazz sensibility is never absent.

The credit for this must go to Eskelin. He points out that his music is not "about" anything, it exists for the experience of the moment. The trio is a mobile test-bed for ideas as open-minded as it is technically accomplished, playing some pieces so new they are known only by numbers. Eskelin asked his audience for possible titles for "No 20" — a five-note motif repeated endlessly as the dynamics and time shifted behind it.

For all his innovation, Eskelin never entirely abandons notions of metre and harmony, but his playing, brittle and robust, tender and hard-edged by turns, shows there are more novel ways of working within them than the high-speed harmonic workouts of most post-Coltrane tenorists.

ALYN SHIPTON

## Pounding the campaign trail for real rock

By rights Edwyn Collins should be playing all the glam-clad stadiums of the world by now. After *Girl Like You* went ballistic, he was everybody's sarcastic best friend. As it is, the should-be-homage-paying hero is still playing to a hardcore cult fan base of thirtysomethings.

No problem. For this not-so-young pretender to the throne has been furrowing a quality path of garage guitar soul songs that should make the new kids on the block kneel at his feet and pay homage.

For Collins eschewed the all-too-reverent and, let's face it, all-too-easy Britpop. And, as his new album shows, he is still speaking with his tongue firmly in his cheek. Frankly he seems nonplussed by the whole post-*Girl Like You* brouhaha, and is hilariously content simply to be getting on with the business now at hand.

The opening title, *The Campaign for Real Rock*, sets the tone for a scarily wry stream of observations on life,



POP

love and the music business over the past 15 years. Too wise to be bitter, the minister for rock without portfolio opts for brevity instead, and who can blame him with back pages like his?

The bulk of the set is drawn from his wonderfully eclectic new album, *I'm Not Following You*, which is a series of wry, dry slices of rock'n'roll insider out-takes. But Collins is far too clever to be nasty, and where the likes of *Downer* would sound bitter from lesser talents, in Collins's plum-in-gob brogue it comes over as never less than cheeky.

He is none too proud, either, to acknowledge his back-catalogue, getting right back to the start of it all with *Falling and Laughing*. The difference here, though, is that, with such a solidly proficient backing as his current band — still featuring former Sex Pistol Paul Cook on drums — the old song cannot fail to sound even better than how you remember the original. By *What Presence*, the ageing showman is strutting his stuff aloft on the bass drum, wiggling his hips and charming the socks off an exceedingly knowing audience.

A magnificent encore of *Rip It Up* adds even more colour to the proceedings, mixing up samples of Seventies disco with the Fall's Mark E. Smith. And a closing *Adidas World* said it all, managing to cock a snook at the Blurs of this world and sound like a born-again B-52s at the same time. Still kicking after all these years, Collins looks set to be a grin-tastic delight for several years yet to come.

NEIL COOPER



TEN OBJECTS OF DESIRE

Richard Cork's daily guide to the Hayward Gallery's new exhibition of still lifes

■ MERET OPPENHEIM: *Object*, 1936

WOMEN artists were not encouraged to shine in male-dominated Surrealist circles. But undaunted, Meret Oppenheim produced one of the movement's most unforgettable images. Taking a cup, saucer and spoon, she transformed their everyday normality with the aid of pale brown fur. It spreads across their surfaces like some threatening, uncontrollable growth. Fur normally imparts a sense of warmth and reassurance. Here, however, it excites disgust and fascination. We recoil, but our curiosity is aroused by its weird, erotic suggestiveness.

□ *Objects of Desire* is at the Hayward (0171-960 4242), sponsored by BMW in association with The Times. TOMORROW: Frida Kahlo's *Still Life with Prickly Pears*, 1938

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**NEIL COOPER** No hiding place: Javier De Frutos (foreground) and co-dancers in De Frutos's *Grass*



**No hiding place: Javier De Frutos (foreground) and co-dancers in De Frutos's *Grass***

**In good form; towering Fischer-Dieskau in fine company**

On 6. Nov. 2. **D. 1. 11.** his first sons and, in his bid to prote-

**C** Concerto Green in E On6 No2 **D** 1 11 his first song and, in his bid to project

his first song and, in his bid to project over the richly scored orchestra, his became an emphatic, correct delivery. The soprano Julio Varady was not best as his young lover, Tove, as she too strained at times to be heard. It was only when Amy Murray began the

Throughout the first half the musical, emotional energy came from the orchestra, as conductor Andrew Davis placed the performance with expertise and fluency. In the second half, where the *Waldemar* rails against God for *Tove's* death, we leave the world of catastrophe to leave and enter the wasteland of the cuckoo king. Here the orchestra took over, with its swooned sensuality and dazed in the crisp world of variations. One could almost feel a cool draught of change as the glassy wind of *Waldemar* heralded *The wild hunt* of the summer wind. Fischer-Dieskau electrified the exhortation, turning the German language itself into music of eloquence and beauty.

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# Three's a crowd pleaser

Matt Wolf meets veteran director Anthony Page as he rebuilds a winning West End stage team

When *A Delicate Balance* opens next week at the Haymarket, it will reunite a West End triumvirate — actress Maggie Smith, playwright Edward Albee and director Anthony Page — who are the combination of any producer's dreams (in this case, the panny impresario is Robert Elms).

In 1994 the three teamed up for the London premiere of Albee's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Three Tall Women* in a staging so successful that, unusually, it was brought back for an encore. This time they join forces for an earlier Pulitzer Prize-winner from the American master, who watched his

Atkins, who plays the coolly self-possessed sister, Agnes, to Smith's alcoholic wit, Claire. Over time — one thinks of Page's early stage work with the late Jill Bennett, and of Vanessa Redgrave as the transsexual tennis player Renee Richards in Page's TV film, *Second Serve* — the director has repeatedly distinguished himself in the company of strong actresses.

"I can't say that it's always very easy," Page says. "But I think women, particularly as they get older, are easier to direct than men. Men don't want to be directed so much, whereas women are more anxious to explore and to find out and to jump into the dark."

Page compares McTeer to the generation of "raw, electrifying" American talent that included Oscar-winner Geraldine Page (no relation), whose golden age of American stage acting was in New York to see. Of Smith he has only the highest praise: "She's like a blowtorch."

**6 Women as they get older are easier to direct than men?**

As director, Page is no stranger to ladies. His *Middlemarch* for the BBC got across-the-board raves. Further back, one can point to his achievement directing Roger Corns' lone art movie, *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden*. In June he beat Sir Richard Eyre and John Caird to win the Tony Award for best director for his production of *A Doll's House*. This London export not only introduced Jamie McTeer to American audiences, but rethought, a potentially fussy Ibsen period piece as an immediate *cri de coeur* from a couple as sexy and volatile as they were ill-matched.

Page, 52, has homes in both Northampton and Manhattan. His current wave of acclaim (a National Theatre *Absolutely Hell* with Judi Dench included) follows a period of some 15 years when he worked largely in America doing film and TV, not all of it distinguished. Now, he has returned to the theatre, which he describes as his first and lasting pleasure.

"I think I feel more at home in the theatre," Page says, sitting in his London flat between weeks in Bath and Cardiff to monitor *A Delicate Balance* on the road. "You're not dealing with a great many other people. It's a much more concentrated group. I like the way things can develop, you make a mistake, and you move forward."

It helps when your colleagues are Dench, McTeer or Smith, not to mention Smith's co-star in the play, Eileen

her mind, in trying to get to the reality of something, how to give it comic edge and energy. She's just got an amazing theatrical imagination. I don't think she's interested in material at all; she wants to be totally convincing."

Does *A Delicate Balance* demand greater intelligence from the actors, not least because of an ornate rhetoric — its opening soliloquy, for instance — that could be daunting to performer and audience alike? "Not intellectual intelligence but emotional intelligence," Page says of the play, a putative drawing-room comedy that remains perhaps Albee's most harrowing peer into the abyss.

"The play needs a lot of truth so that it doesn't sound mannered. It's very peculiar, very meticulous writing, and very difficult to learn. It's not at all how people speak. The challenge is to make it seem spontaneous."

Born in Bangalore in southern India into a military family and then educated at Oxford, Page trained at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. He accepted Tony Richardson's invitation to assist at the Royal Court, and ended up running that theatre for much of the Sixties, either alone or with William Gaskill and Lindsay Anderson. There he developed a similar association with John Osborne over

six or seven plays that he has so far enjoyed with Albee over two. Indeed, he applied again to run the Court in 1992, the year that Stephen Daldry was given the post. "I thought I could go back and do it very well now, because I know how to stand back and be much more objective, much more protective and nourishing of people."

The Albee connection, meanwhile, almost didn't happen. Though "absolutely knocked out" by *Three Tall Women* off Broadway, Page watched as the London production was turned over to his friend Karel Reisz. Two weeks into rehearsal, Reisz and the play parted company, leaving Page free to answer the producers' rescue call. "They needed an emergency doctor, and we simply started again."

Looking ahead, Page is discussing a possible Gorky revival at the National, as well as an American-backed film of *A Doll's House* to star McTeer. "A lot of young directors say 'Why or how are you still working?' I feel as long as you can keep the energy and enthusiasm, you do get better because you know more. I've done an awful lot of work to pay mortgages; now it's a great luxury to work for the love of it."

*A Delicate Balance* is in preview and opens at the Haymarket (071-990 8800) next Tuesday

## A story made exceedingly good

Rudyard Kipling is a buttonholing writer, the sort who clutches the reader's lapel and fastens his fingers there with Lots of Capital Letters and jovial tricks. O Best Beloved, and treats us as if we are just about to be tucked up in bed but can listen to one last story. A good story, usually.

His own life makes a good story too, though he could not have written more than a corner of it himself, and the part where his son Jack dies in the trenches he was only able to convey in poetry. This is the part that David Haig tells, in his first stage play, and a most accomplished job he has made of Kipling's determined efforts to turn his schoolboy son into a soldier. Haig plays Kipling, and though the moustache and round glasses contribute greatly to the personation it is the credible mixture of dedication and passion, blind patriot and blinkered papa, which Haig brings to the role that turns him into Kipling before our eyes.

Young Jack (John Little) is so myopic that he cannot read letters four inches high from more than a yard away. Turned down four times by the Army he allows his father to pull strings with powerful friends and at last leaves home. For it is to get away from his over-protective and encircling father that he acquiesces in the propaganda that today sounds truly sickening, that it is the glorious duty of the young to sacrifice their lives for the Empire.

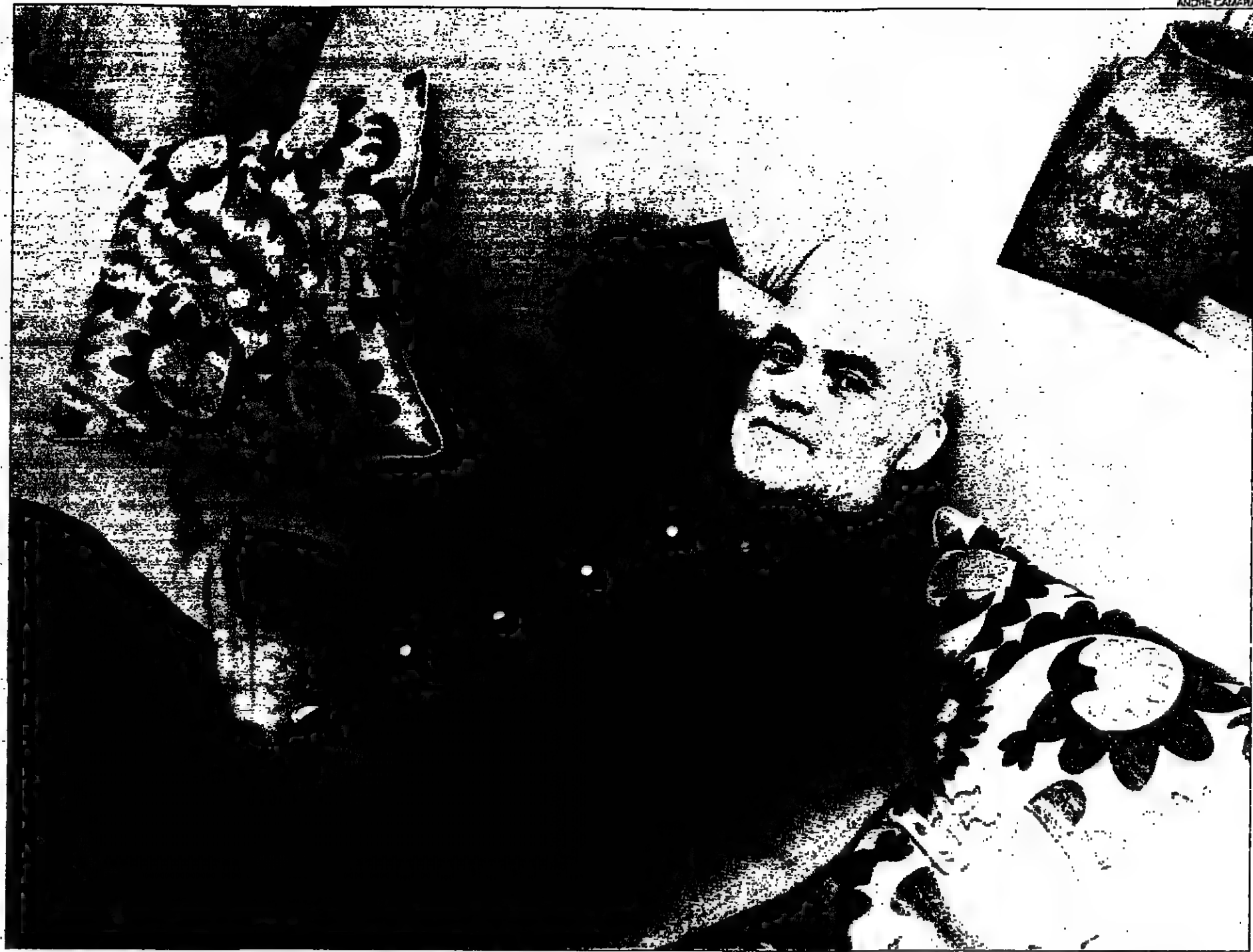
Many thanks to the Haymarket Theatre for the opportunity to see this play.

Most of the play's first half takes place in Kipling's study and, unexpectedly in this theatre, Michael Taylor's set, its furniture and Persian rugs, is trucked back, and up from the forestage rises the wall of a trench with mud and soggy sandbags and continual rain. Second Lieutenant Kipling is forever having to wipe the raindrops off his specs, and though one cannot suppose he would have lasted much longer with the best sight in the world, his father's contribution to his death is clear.

Haig develops the story in scenes of considerable power, with tension building as we wait to hear Jack's clear-minded sister (good performance from Sarah Howe) tell unpalatable truths to her father, and for Mrs Kipling (Belinda Lang, also good) to reach the limit of her terror and rage. Haig's feeling for period is admirable, and John Dove's direction makes the scene with the sullen, panicky, infuriated soldiers utterly convincing.

The scene when the parents at last stop hoping they might see their son again is written not only with an understanding of grief but also of how to dramatise it, and make the result convey the character of their married life.

JEREMY KINGSTON



Love match: "I've done a lot of work to pay mortgages," says Anthony Page, in London to direct Maggie Smith in an Edward Albee play. "Now it's a great luxury to work for the love of it"

## Back to school with a vengeance

It is difficult to review a play by a writer who has died recently and prematurely, especially when it comes with as fine a testimonial as Dominic Dromgoole has contributed to the Vic programme. There is no doubt that Roy MacGregor, author of *Our Own Kind* and *Phoenix*, was talented and promising. Nor can anybody question his "large-heartedness and magnanimity". But his last play, *Snake in the Grass*, is not just weak on "polish and finesse", as Dromgoole suggests. Only occasionally does it rise to the challenge of a subject that is at once topical, fashionable and painful.

What is this? The deliberately bland first scene, in which John Normington's earnest, high-minded Edward Sliddon prepares to conduct a small-town choir in a performance of Haydn's *Creation*, gives no hint. Nor does the second, in which Kevin Whately's coarse, greasy Ray Lucas rolls away in a local garage. Even when the roughneck and ex-con interrupts a meeting at which the musician and schoolmaster is being honoured by his fellow citizens, the vital information is tantalisingly withheld. Only after just about everyone in the

audience must have twigged the truth does MacGregor come out with it.

Ray has returned from a long stretch in prison for GBH to accuse his old teacher of abusing him years before. He was a boy from a sink housing estate with a gift for music which Edward encouraged, only to betray him; or so he proceeds to claim. But is Ray to be believed or is he, as the respectable citizens of Hazlett Heath prefer to believe, a lunatic thug and crazed stalker

**Snake in the Grass**  
Old Vic

whom the police must run out of town?

The more-or-less definitive answer to this, which comes right at the end, is neither unexpected nor very well handled. But that need not matter. Again, MacGregor tends to caricature local nobs who say

things like (Greg Hicks's arrogant doctor) "I pine for the day when the lower orders knew their place and kept within it". But neither this nor the sometimes clunky dialogue would be hugely important if we saw a bit further into the hearts of his two principals.

Normington is a wonderfully sensitive actor, but the play gives him scant opportunity to suggest that there is anything in his psyche but the blithe serenity allegedly felt by the music-loving apparatchiks at

Auschwitz. Whately fares better, and does successfully suggest a wounded, embittered soul; but more sporadically than one might wish. The final impression left by MacGregor's text and Dromgoole's production is, yes, of magnanimity and compassion, at least for Ray. It is still hard to see the play as much more than a compassionate, magnanimous melodrama.

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CHANGING TIMES

## GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

TIMOTHY RICHARDS

Age: 30  
Profession: Tenor.  
First-time lucky: He is collecting excellent notices for his professional debut in the title role of Franz Lehár's comedy mistaken identity, *The Count of Luxembourg*. The D'Oyly Carte Opera Company production is in Sheffield this week, with another eight stops remaining on a tour of England that runs until mid-December.

How long since he gave up the day job? Just a few months. Winning the Townyn Roberts scholarship at last year's National Eisteddfod of Wales brought him plenty of one-off recitals, but before he Count he was combining those engagements with supply teaching at primary schools in Swansea, where his wife, Swan, is a university lecturer in Welsh. "I had sent D'Oyly Carte my CV two years ago but the invitation to audition came completely out of the blue."

Vocal genes? His mother was a keen member of the local amateur operatic society and his father, a pharmaceuticals salesman, ran a mixed choir near the family home in Gwent. "I was singing in Welsh and English from a very early age."

Passion: He could easily have ended up performing at Cardiff Arms Park instead of the Sheffield Lyceum. "I played outside half for the Welsh Under-15 rugby team in wins over Scotland and Italy in 1982. But I was already determined to become a professional singer and, the following season, took my music tutor's advice to give up rugby."

Who has helped him to develop his voice? Half a dozen "marvellous" tutors, most recently the Welsh tenor, Dennis O'Neill. "His advice is for me to get out there, play parts, make mistakes and be shrewd enough to learn from them."

Does he feel part of a Welsh operatic tradition? "The great Welsh singers, like Geraint Evans and Ryland Davies, have always performed with *hwl* — real passion — and that's what I'm trying to do. It's taken me a long time to get where I am now and I don't want to be around for just five minutes."



DANIEL ROSENTHAL



Telephone:  
0171 680 6806

# Crème de la Crème

Fax:  
0171 782 7586

## Challenging opportunities PA PROFESSIONALS

PA/Divisional Management Team Co-ordinator  
to Director of Community Services

Ref: 873  
LONDON  
Salary £18,099 - £20,976  
Would you relish the opportunity to provide secretarial and administrative support in this important area of service provision for blind and partially sighted people? Working to the Director of CSD you would be providing a vital supporting role, prioritising and planning office systems to ensure effective management of the support Directorate. You should have proven skills in servicing meetings, WPM/Word 50WPM, and excellent written and verbal communication skills.

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Salary £16,260 - £19,155

An experienced and enthusiastic PA you should be self-reliant and able to plan and prioritise a busy workload, WPM/Word 50 WPM and previous experience of servicing meetings and travel are essential. These will be complemented by excellent communication skills and previous experience of working for senior management.

For an information pack and application form please write to the  
Personnel Department, RNIB, 224 Great Portland Street,  
London W1N 6AA or telephone 0171-388 2370  
(answerphone) quoting appropriate reference.

Closing date 29th October 1997.  
Interviews ref 873: 21st November 1997.  
Interviews ref 839: 24th November 1997.

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Royal National Institute for the Blind



### PA OFFICE MANAGEMENT: Entertainment Industry Salary c£25,000 pa neg

David Graham & Associates helps writers, producers and broadcasters, handles major television commissions for the UK government and is actively involved in the reform and improvement of the UK's creative industries. We gather and hold the country's most extensive array of TV information at our monitoring and data processing centre in Somerset. We now wish to establish a London Office to run our education programme, offer presentations, support marketing, and house consultants.

Our key staff are fully occupied, so we need the right individual to establish, equip and run a London office, working to the Managing Director.

You need to be practical, highly intelligent, self-reliant and flexible, ready to combine a PA/office management role with client liaison and report preparation, capable of expert level in Word and PowerPoint (intermediate in Excel) with a strong interest in the electronic office. Above all, you need to like the entertainment industry, and show the commitment and enthusiasm we need from a new key person.

Please reply, enclosing a c/v to:  
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TAUNTON, TA1 1TP.  
Marking your letter confidential.

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Please forward or fax full CV together with covering letter to:

David Appleford  
Managing Director  
Alpha Thames  
Essex House  
Station Road  
UPMINSSTER  
Essex RM14 2SU  
Fax: 01706 251273



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### PA TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE ProShare (UK) Ltd

Salary c£19,000

London

ProShare, the organisation which promotes share based investment is looking for a senior secretary to support the Chief Executive. This is a great opportunity for a bright self-starter with a willingness to take on responsibility. You will have an interest in the world of personal finance and would like to develop your skills and understanding in a young and dynamic environment.

The successful candidate will provide secretarial and administrative support to the Chief Executive, organising his diary, arranging meetings and travel and co-ordinating his activities. Other responsibilities will include liaising with and providing briefings for the Chief Executive and other senior executives and researching issues relating to ProShare's work.

This position is much more than secretarial - you will be fully involved in the workings of the organisation and will have many opportunities to develop your role.

You will be a graduate, with previous experience in a senior secretarial role and have excellent oral and written communication skills. Your computer skills will include Word 6.0 for Windows and PowerPoint and a knowledge of the Internet and on-line information services would be an advantage.

Interested candidates should write enclosing full CV to Head of Personnel, ProShare (UK) Limited, Library Chambers, 13 & 14 Basinghall Street, London EC4V 3BQ.

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or fax CV to: 0181 630 6301.

Please reply to

Box No 7972

### PA TO DIRECTOR GENERAL

The Council of Mortgage Lenders is the representative trade association in the UK for mortgage lending organisations, including banks, building societies and other lenders. It represents 98% of the mortgage market.

The CML currently has a vacancy for a confident individual who has had at least 5 years' previous experience as a PA/Executive Secretary and who is IT literate with accurate typing (60wpm+). This post requires a self-motivated individual with excellent interpersonal skills, capable of working independently as well as part of a small team. Your excellent organisational skills will be put to good use in administering the Director General's office, secretarial work and dealing with your own correspondence.

An attractive salary and benefits package will be offered to the successful candidate. If you have all these qualities and are interested then please send a copy of your Curriculum Vitae, with a covering letter stating your current salary details and expectations, no later than Friday 31 October, to: Michelle Dryer, Personnel Assistant, The Council of Mortgage Lenders, 3 Savile Row, London W1X 1AF

No agencies

### Director's PA £20K Eating

Taylor Nelson AGB plc is the UK's largest international market information company listed on the London Stock Exchange. Reporting to the Finance Director, we are seeking to recruit an experienced secretary to provide high quality support in the smooth and efficient running of the office.

This position will demand an assertive personality, good administrative and secretarial skills, with previous experience (at least one year) working at senior level. There are opportunities to progress and a high level person will enjoy this friendly, fast moving environment. You must have fluent typing skills and a good working knowledge of Windows 95. A high level of computer literacy is desirable, but training is available to the right person.

To apply, please send your CV together with current salary details to Judith George, Taylor Nelson AGB plc, Westgate, London W5 1UA.

### EXPERIENCED PA

C.£22k + Profit Share/Bonus

Chairman of top 10 Advertising/Direct Marketing Agency requires dedicated PA 24-7 to organise hectic life. This is a demanding role requiring impeccable communication skills and ability to work on own initiative in a fast-paced, exciting environment. Flexible hours are often necessary.

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Write to: Vicky Fleming,  
Triangle Communications Ltd,  
17 Newman Street,  
London W1P 3HD

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up to £17K

Team secretary required for a small property company with offices in Macclesfield. This is a busy role working for four people with a 70/30 typing/editing content. A typing speed of over 50 wpm and a good knowledge of WPM with some Excel using Windows 95 required.

In the first instance, please send CVs with a covering letter to:

Helen Chadwick, Hertford Taylor Cook,  
6-10 Bruton Street,  
London W1X 7AG, fax: 0171 491 3832.

### HARRIET GABB RECRUITMENT LTD

PA TO Managing Director

A small, growing business, specialising in public policy and politics, based in the West End, is looking for a flexible and computer competent outgoing, well organised and efficient PA for its MD.

Salary £22k + Benefits

Please fax CV to Key Gigg  
on 0171 734 7032

### PA/SECRETARY

c.£17,000 p.a.

Busy trading office in London (SE26) seeks to appoint a well spoken, responsible and helpful person with excellent secretarial skills to assist the MD. An 'N' level in English or Mathematics, Multitask Premier Accounting System & Microsoft Office Professional experience useful. Non smoking office. Please send hand-written letter with CV to:

Sally Hardy, Important UK Ltd  
54 Wilton Way,  
London SE26 2GP  
Telephone 0181 689 0511  
No Agencies

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(Not Com.)

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Interview View a Cam.

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Fluency in Word and PowerPoint, good document and letter writing skills, together with a willingness to work under pressure will not only be well rewarded, but appreciated.

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You must have at least 2 years legal and banking experience at Partner level and be a native English/German speaker.

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Salary £22k + Benefits

Please fax CV to Key Gigg  
on 0171 734 7032

### PA/SECRETARY

c.£17,000 p.a.

Busy trading office in London (SE26) seeks to appoint a well spoken, responsible and helpful person with excellent secretarial skills to assist the MD. An 'N' level in English or Mathematics, Multitask Premier Accounting System & Microsoft Office Professional experience useful. Non smoking office. Please send hand-written letter with CV



## TIME SAVERS

**SPREADSHEETS** are excellent for designing forms for everything from customer feedback to To Do lists. Here is how to make them look better using Microsoft Excel, although the tips could apply to other packages.

- Turn off the gridlines if you don't want them displayed: Tools/Options/View/Gridlines.
- If you need several lines of text in a box but cannot get it to make a new line, use Alt-Enter.
- If the form is being filled out online, say on the computer network, you can hide cells containing comments you don't want to be seen. Choose the row or column to be hidden, then Format/Row (or Column) and Hide.
- To stop Excel entering the copyright symbol (©) when you type brackets around the letter c, choose Tools/AutoCorrect and clear the "replace text as you type" box.
- You can use the Drawing toolbar to draw boxes and designs. To prevent users accidentally deleting them, choose Tools/Protection/Protect Sheet and make sure the Objects toolbox is checked.

CHRIS WARD

Susan MacDonald on the organisations set up for secretaries to improve their technological knowledge and status

## How to keep up with the times

**D**o you regard yourself as a professional? If so — and so should — are you a member of a professional secretarial body? The more assertive the role of PAs, secretaries and support staff becomes, the more useful it becomes to join an association that will look after your needs.

The idea of such bodies has been around for a long time. The Institute of Qualified Private Secretaries (IQPS), the biggest and most prestigious of the professional bodies, was set up 40 years ago. As secretarial requirements have moved from boss's helper to a self-starting role, so the IQPS, and others, have set out to improve the image of their members and ensure they have access to information and training.

Sonia Vamular, a Briton who worked in France as a secretary before going into management consultancy, felt the need to set up The European Association of Professional Secretaries (EAPS) in 1974, just after Britain joined the then EEC.

Fasttrack, the Association for Professional Secretaries and Support Staff, was set up two years ago to help secretaries to keep abreast of the technological revolution.

To join the IQPS, secretaries must pass an exam which tests skills such as management appreciation and knowledge of business structure. EAPS has representatives in 23 European countries and about 1,800 members who are secretaries to

chairmen, directors, senior managers, administrators and decision-makers across Europe.

EAPS aims to raise the profile of the profession, and holds seminars, monthly meetings, social events and an annual conference. These give secretaries across Europe the chance to discuss salaries, conditions, training and business issues.

Its degrees of membership — full, associate, affiliate and honorary — are based on the amount of experience a member has. To qualify for full membership secretaries must have at least three years' experience at decision-making level. Organisations can also join by taking out corporate membership.

The Secretarial Development Network (SDN) is a small but fast-growing network of organisations which perceive the need to develop the secretarial role. Representatives from these organisations range from secretaries, executive secretaries and PAs to personnel and human resources officers and some line managers. As its questionnaires show, it backs secretaries in their quest for improvement and status.

Jane Garrett, Fasttrack's director of membership, believes secretaries must develop and update their work in order to be part of the future.

"Secretaries should be taking control of their careers, and this means having the chance to get training and information when needed," she says.

Fasttrack also acts as consultants for organisations who want to reorganise their secretarial area. "Many companies know they have to look to the future but are not sure what they are looking for in a secretary," she says. "For instance, when buying in IT equipment, there is often no discussion with secretaries about what they need."

Pamela Callaghan, its press officer, puts it more succinctly. "We are smashing through old-fashioned ideas," she says.

"Frustratingly," Ms Garrett says, "some secretaries join Fasttrack and then resign because they say they have improved and so don't need us any more. They don't realise that updating must be continuous if they are to keep pace with the opportunities that technology offers."

Peter Tuner, who is in charge of Fasttrack's technical side, advises companies on buying IT office equipment and how to make the best use of it.

Fasttrack, set up by Angela Mortimer, the recruitment consultancy, offers information, training and

seminars. Members receive a quarterly magazine which spreads its articles over a wide area — from secretarial subjects such as how to get promoted, to general business information such as demystifying the money markets.

Portfolio also gives support. It is a glossy, reference magazine for secretaries. The first issue of this annual handbook was at the end of September, and its editor, Penny Cotter, says that it was created as an addition to Executive PA, also published by Hobsons, after she realised there was a need for widespread information and contacts listings for senior secretaries.

"During the downsizing of the early 1990s, many middle managers lost their jobs and PAs found themselves doing their work. Many are running their own programmes and building teams to help them."

"Now secretaries are not just in meetings to take the minutes but are participating as team members," she says. "Portfolio aims to give them the help they need." It is also a good read both for business and relaxation.

Perhaps one of the bravest steps in forming a professional body is for secretaries in a large organisation to form their own. Victoria Hampson did just that when she formed Pathway, a network committee to promote the image of more than 100 secretaries and support staff working for the St Helens & Knowsley Hospital Trust on Merseyside.



Training and information is vital for a secretary to advance

Seminars, workshops and fitness classes were set up in the lunch hour, and a secretary of the year award is decided by consultants and managers. The network also undertook to provide assessment and support for the secretaries. Although they were wary at first, Ms Hampson says, the bosses now give them full support.

● IQPS 01628 625007. EAPS 01483 729131. Fasttrack 0171-741 4481. Portfolio: Fiona Jenkins on 0171-336 6633.

Telephone: 0171 680 6806

## Crème de la Crème

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Court of Appeal

Law Report October 15 1997

Court of Appeal

# Costs warning over London firms Providing background of offenders

**Truscott v Truscott**  
**Wraith v Sheffield**  
**Forgemasters Ltd**  
Before Lord Justice Kennedy, Lord Justice Alderson and Lord Justice Auld

[Judgment July 31]  
In appropriate circumstances a successful party to litigation in the county court was entitled to recover, on taxation of its costs, the increased costs of instructing a solicitor outside the area of the court in which his case was heard. But the fact that the successful party was a trade union, or insurer, who had adopted the practice of sending all its work to London solicitors was of limited relevance on taxation in an individual case.

The Court of Appeal held in a reserved judgment, allowing an appeal by John Michael Truscott against the order of Judge Cullum on January 16, 1996 on taxation of his costs in an action by Beverly Mary Truscott against him, in which the judge had held that the charging rate to be applied to his London solicitors' costs was a provincial rate.

The Court of Appeal also allowed an appeal by Sheffield Forgemasters Ltd against the order of Mr Justice Potter sitting with assessors (The Times February 20, 1996; [1996] 1 WLR 617) refusing their application for costs in an action by the defendant, Trevor Wraith, in which the judge had held that the charging rate to be applied to his London solicitors' costs was a provincial rate.

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structed by his trade union on his behalf.  
Miss Elizabeth Gumbel for Mr Truscott; Mr Guy Mansfield, QC, for Mrs Truscott.

Mr Jeremy Morgan for Sheffield Forgemasters; Mr Guy Sankey, QC and Mr Paul Kilgus for Mr Wraith.

LORD JUSTICE KENNEDY said that the issue was whether the liability of the unsuccessful party ordered to pay costs should be restricted to what a reasonably competent solicitor practising in the area of the court, or in the area where the case was heard, might have been expected to charge, or whether the successful party should be entitled to recover the sums claimed by the solicitor who was in fact instructed to act on his behalf.

Order 62, rule 1(2) of the Rules of the Supreme Court applied to actions in the High Court and county courts see Order 38, rule 1(3) of the County Court Rules.

Rule 12 provides: "(1) On a taxation of costs on the standard basis there shall be allowed a reasonable amount in respect of all costs reasonably incurred and any doubt as to whether the costs were reasonably incurred or were reasonable in amount shall be resolved in favour of the paying party."

That rule had been in its present form since 1986 and authorities prior to that date had to be read with due regard to the wording of rules previously in force. What was said in *Smith v Buller* (1875) LR 19 Q 473, that the successful party should bear no more than the

amount of a lump sum award from £40,000 to £77,500.  
Miss Christina Morris who did not appear below, for the husband; Miss Ann Hussey for the wife.

LORD JUSTICE THORPE said that it was one of the paramount considerations in applying the section 25 criteria to endeavour to stretch what was available to cover the need of each for a home, given that there were young children involved.

Obviously the primary care needed whatever was available to make a main home for the children, but it was of importance, albeit of lesser importance, that the children should have a home of their own where the children could enjoy their contact with him.

In any case where there was, by stretch and a degree of risk-taking, the possibility of a division to

enable both to release themselves, that was an exceptionally important consideration, and one which would almost invariably have a decisive impact on the outcome.

Here the judge had the opportunity to make a division which would just about enable each to release. It might require some sacrifice, but that was the sort of methods to which the court regularly had to have recourse in those cases where the money was just enough. This was just such a case.

Solicitors: Abrahamson Drenth, May & Merzians.

necessary costs, could not be applied directly to the present rule since it related to a rule which in significant respects differently worded.

In *R v Dudley Magistrates' Court, Ex parte Power City Stores Ltd* (The Times January 18, 1990; [1990] 154 JP 654) the Divisional Court considered section 16(4) and (1) of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985.

Lord Justice Woolf said that the effect of the subsections, the wording of which was reminiscent of Order 62, rule 1(2), was to require the taxing officer to carry out a two-stage test.

First he had to consider whether the expenses claimed were properly incurred by the defendant. If so, he had to ask what amount would be reasonably sufficient to compensate the defendant for those costs.

Regulations made under the Act contained precisely similar wording to Order 62, rule 1(2). The court held that the question was whether the applicant acted reasonably in employing leading counsel. If the answer was in the affirmative then the expenses were properly incurred for the purposes of section 16.

*Truscott v Truscott*  
The following were matters which the judge should have regarded as relevant when considering the reasonableness of Mr Truscott's decision to instruct Alison Trent & Co:

1 The importance of the matter to Mr Truscott;  
2 The legal and factual complexities;  
3 The location of his home.

No doubt there were firms of solicitors in Sheffield or Leeds well qualified to do the work and in reality the only reason why the work went to London solicitors was that the union had adopted the practice of sending all its work to those solicitors. That connection was of limited relevance on taxation in an individual case.

None of what his Lordship said was intended to put pressure on trade unions or insurers to change their policy and parcel out work so that different solicitors acted for them in different areas.

But it was the duty of unions and insurers in each individual case to keep down the costs of litigation and that might well mean that if they went to London solicitors who charged London rates for a case which had no obvious connection with London, the latter being not required to pay more than the local rates, they would, even if successful, recover less than the solicitors had charged.

The appeal would be allowed and the costs awarded to Mr Truscott. Lord Justice Auld agreed.  
Solicitors: Alison Trent & Co; Marsh, Perriman & Cheale, Lincolnshire.

Neelson & Co, Leeds; Russell Jones & Walker, Bristol.

4 Mr Truscott's possibly well founded dissatisfaction with his original solicitors.

5 The fact that the new solicitors had been recommended to him.

6 The location of the firm, their accessibility to him and their readiness to attend the relevant court and

7 What, if anything, he might reasonably be expected to know of the fees likely to be charged by them as compared with the fees of other solicitors whom he might reasonably be expected to have considered.

If the judge had considered those matters he would have reached a different conclusion, namely that the costs incurred by Mr Truscott to instruct Alison Trent & Co were not reasonable in the circumstances.

What Mr Justice Potter said in *Wraith v Sheffield Forgemasters Ltd* (The Times October 15, 1997; [1997] 1 WLR 1459) was correct but his Lordship took issue with the way the principle was applied to the facts of the case.

It was reasonable for Mr Wraith to consult his trade union but he knew what the legal fees would be and he would have to expect to obtain competent services for Mr Wraith, who lived in Sheffield and had sustained a serious accident there.

None of what his Lordship said was intended to put pressure on trade unions or insurers to change their policy and parcel out work so that different solicitors acted for them in different areas.

But it was the duty of unions and insurers in each individual case to keep down the costs of litigation and that might well mean that if they went to London solicitors who charged London rates for a case which had no obvious connection with London, the latter being not required to pay more than the local rates, they would, even if successful, recover less than the solicitors had charged.

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Practice Direction (Crime: Antecedents)  
New arrangements for the provision of information of antecedents of offenders following the introduction of computerised information from the Police National Computer were to apply forthwith.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, so stated when sitting in the Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, with Mr Justice Potter and Mr Justice Butterfield on October 9.

Examples of the new standard format to be used could be obtained from Room W18, Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL. Telephone 0171 936 6751.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE stated: Standard for the provision of information of antecedents in the crown court and magistrates' courts

1 The procedures had been agreed by the senior judiciary, Lord Chancellor's Department, Magistrates' Association, Justice's Clerks Society, Crown Prosecution Service and the Association of Chief Police Officers, and would assist the prosecution in presenting antecedents to both the crown court and the magistrates' courts.

They replaced those attached to Practice Direction (Crime: Antecedents) (1993) 1 WLR 1459.

They allowed for the provision of information of antecedents in respect of previous convictions and cautions to be provided by the police directly from the Police National Computer (PNC). The procedures set the standard as to the level of information to be provided.

2 In the crown court, the police would provide brief details of the circumstances of the last three similar convictions, and/or of convictions likely to be of interest to the court, the latter being judged on a case by case basis. That information should be provided separately and attached to the antecedents.

3 Where the current alleged offence was within the term of an existing community order, for example, probation order, and it was known that that order was still in force then, so far as the crown court was concerned, to enable the court to consider the possibility of revoking that order, details of the circumstances of the offence leading to the community order should be included in the antecedents.

4 Preparation of antecedents and standard format magistrates' courts and crown court

Personal details and summary of convictions and cautions to be provided to the crown court/probation summary sheet.

Previous convictions: PNC court/defence/probation printout, supplemented by form MG16 if the

police force held convictions not shown on PNC.  
Recorded cautions: PNC court/defence/probation printout, supplemented by form MG17 if the police force held cautions not shown on PNC.

In addition to the crown court

Circumstances of last three similar convictions: Circumstances of offence leading to community order still in force: Form MG16. The detail should be brief and include the date of the offence.

5 Provision of antecedents to the crown court and magistrates' courts

The crown court antecedents would be prepared by the police immediately following committal proceedings, including committals for sentence, transfers under section 4 of the Criminal Justice Act 1987 or section 53 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, or on receipt of a notice of appeal, excluding non-imprisonable motoring offences.

Seven copies of the antecedents would be prepared in respect of each defendant. Two copies were to be provided to the CPS and the remaining five to be sent to the crown court. The court would send one copy to the defence and one to

the Probation Service. The remaining copies were for the court's use. Where following conviction a custodial order was made one copy was to be attached to the order sent to the prison.

The antecedents had to be provided as above, within 21 days of committal or transfer in each case. Any points arising from them were to be raised with the police by the defence solicitor as soon as possible and, where there was time, at least seven days before the hearing date so that the matter could be resolved prior to that hearing.

Seven days before the hearing date, the police would check the record of convictions. Details of any additional convictions would be provided using the standard format above. Those would be provided as above and attached to the documents already supplied. Details of any additional outstanding cases would also be provided at that stage.

Magistrates' courts

The magistrates' court antecedents would be prepared by the police and submitted to the CPS with the case file.

Five copies of the antecedents

would be prepared in respect of each defendant and provided to the CPS who would be responsible for distributing them to others at the sentencing hearing.

Normally two copies would be provided to the court, one to the defence and one to the Probation Service when appropriate. Where following conviction a custodial order was made, one of the court's copies was to be attached to the order sent to the prison.

In instances where antecedents had been provided to the court some time before the hearing the police would, if requested to do so by the CPS, check the record of convictions.

Details of any additional convictions would be provided using the standard format above. Those would be provided as above and attached to the documents already supplied. Details of any additional outstanding cases would also be provided at that stage.

6 The above arrangements whereby the police provided the antecedents to the CPS for passing on to others would apply unless there was a local agreement between the CPS and the court altering that.

What was, or should be, the overall rule could not depend on such irrelevances. If both occupiers were aware of the potential danger, if both would have to be involved in any effective steps to avert it, and if one or both would suffer in his enjoyment of possession if it was not averted, how could it be a defensible rule that the uphill occupier was under a duty to act but the downhill occupier not?

It would, in his Lordship's judgment, be a serious blot on any rational system of law to tolerate, and unreasonably to practice, an attempt to accommodate anomalies of the kind which would follow from a rule which perpetuated a distinction between the duties of uphill and downhill neighbours.

His Lordship found the council negligent and that it was liable to the plaintiffs in nuisance for damages for breach of duty.

Solicitors: Elliot & Co; Dibb Lupton Alsop, Sheffield; Kennedy.

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## Each party needs a home when children involved

**M v B (Ancillary proceedings: Lump sum)**  
Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Hutton and Lord Justice Thorpe

[Judgment October 2]  
It was a paramount consideration, particularly where children were involved, when granting financial relief as laid down in section 25 of the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, as substituted by section 3 of the Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984, to endeavour to stretch the capital sums available so as to cover the needs of each of the parties for a home of his or her own.

The Court of Appeal so stated on October 2 when allowing a father's appeal in ancillary relief proceedings by varying an order made by Mr Justice Johnson in November 1996 to the extent of increasing the

amount of a lump sum award from £40,000 to £77,500.

Miss Christina Morris who did not appear below, for the husband; Miss Ann Hussey for the wife.

LORD JUSTICE THORPE said that it was one of the paramount considerations in applying the section 25 criteria to endeavour to stretch what was available to cover the need of each for a home, given that there were young children involved.

Obviously the primary care needed whatever was available to make a main home for the children, but it was of importance, albeit of lesser importance, that the children should have a home of their own where the children could enjoy their contact with him.

In any case where there was, by stretch and a degree of risk-taking, the possibility of a division to

enable both to release themselves, that was an exceptionally important consideration, and one which would almost invariably have a decisive impact on the outcome.

Here the judge had the opportunity to make a division which would just about enable each to release. It might require some sacrifice, but that was the sort of methods to which the court regularly had to have recourse in those cases where the money was just enough. This was just such a case.

Solicitors: Abrahamson Drenth, May & Merzians.

4 Mr Truscott's possibly well founded dissatisfaction with his original solicitors.

5 The fact that the new solicitors had been recommended to him.

6 The location of the firm, their accessibility to him and their readiness to attend the relevant court and

necessary costs, could not be applied directly to the present rule since it related to a rule which in significant respects differently worded.

In *R v Dudley Magistrates' Court, Ex parte Power City Stores Ltd* (The Times January 18, 1990; [1990] 154 JP 654) the Divisional Court considered section 16(4) and (1) of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985.

Lord Justice Woolf said that the effect of the subsections, the wording of which was reminiscent of Order 62, rule 1(2), was to require the taxing officer to carry out a two-stage test.

First he had to consider whether the expenses claimed were properly incurred by the defendant. If so, he had to ask what amount would be reasonably sufficient to compensate the defendant for those costs.

Regulations made under the Act contained precisely similar wording to Order 62, rule 1(2). The court held that the question was whether the applicant acted reasonably in employing leading counsel. If the answer was in the affirmative then the expenses were properly incurred for the purposes of section 16.

*Truscott v Truscott*  
The following were matters which the judge should have regarded as relevant when considering the reasonableness of Mr Truscott's decision to instruct Alison Trent & Co:

1 The importance of the matter to Mr Truscott;  
2 The legal and factual complexities;  
3 The location of his home.

No doubt there were firms of solicitors in Sheffield or Leeds well qualified to do the work and in reality the only reason why the work went to London solicitors was that the union had adopted the practice of sending all its work to those solicitors. That connection was of limited relevance on taxation in an individual case.

None of what his Lordship said was intended to put pressure on trade unions or insurers to change their policy and parcel out work so that different solicitors acted for them in different areas.

But it was the duty of unions and insurers in each individual case to keep down the costs of litigation and that might well mean that if they went to London solicitors who charged London rates for a case which had no obvious connection with London, the latter being not required to pay more than the local rates, they would, even if successful, recover less than the solicitors had charged.

The appeal would be allowed and the costs awarded to Mr Truscott. Lord Justice Auld agreed.  
Solicitors: Alison Trent & Co; Marsh, Perriman & Cheale, Lincolnshire.

Neelson & Co, Leeds; Russell Jones & Walker, Bristol.

4 Mr Truscott's possibly well founded dissatisfaction with his original solicitors.

5 The fact that the new solicitors had been recommended to him.

6 The location of the firm, their accessibility to him and their readiness to attend the relevant court and

7 What, if anything, he might reasonably be expected to know of the fees likely to be charged by them as compared with the fees of other solicitors whom he might reasonably be expected to have considered.

If the judge had considered those matters he would have reached a different conclusion, namely that the costs incurred by Mr Truscott to instruct Alison Trent & Co were not reasonable in the circumstances.

What Mr Justice Potter said in *Wraith v Sheffield Forgemasters Ltd* (The Times October 15, 1997; [1997] 1 WLR 1459) was correct but his Lordship took issue with the way the principle was applied to the facts of the case.

It was reasonable for Mr Wraith to consult his trade union but he knew what the legal fees would be and he would have to expect to obtain competent services for Mr Wraith, who lived in Sheffield and had sustained a serious accident there.

None of what his Lordship said was intended to put pressure on trade unions or insurers to change their policy and parcel out work so that different solicitors acted for them in different areas.

But it was the duty of unions and insurers in each individual case to keep down the costs of litigation and that might well mean that if they went to London solicitors who charged London rates for a case which had no obvious connection with London, the latter being not







RACING: HANDICAP SPECIALIST HANDS OVER RUNNING OF EPSOM STABLE TO SON



Face North, the winner of the Victoria Cup and the Royal Hunt Cup, both at Ascot, exemplified Akehurst's skilful placing of his handicappers

Akehurst applies final touch

By RICHARD EVANS  
RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE massed ranks of bookmakers, ranging from Ladbrokes to the back-row satchel carriers in every Silver Ring, breathed a collective sigh of relief yesterday after Reg Akehurst announced that he is to retire as a trainer at the end of next month.

The Epsom-based Akehurst, 68, was probably responsible for relieving the betting industry of more money with his carefully executed handicap coups than any trainer in business today. Akehurst once claimed, one suspects tongue in cheek, that he did not bet, before adding mischievously, "but the mis-tus enjoys a punt".

"He was the master of the big handicap and his name was always the first bookmaker's

would look for when pricing up those races," Rob Hartnett, of the Tote, said yesterday. "There was no-one quite like Reg. He could strike fear into bookmakers' hearts."

Akehurst won most of the Flat season's valuable handicaps, from the six-furlong Wokingham with Astrac, to the Ebor, run over 14m, with Sarawak. He also landed the Royal Hunt Cup with Face North and Red Robbo, who won the race this year.

The victory of Sarawak at York four years ago underlined Akehurst's remarkable ability to sweeten up a cast-off from another yard. The horse had been tailed off at Ayr, but landed an enormous touch first time out for Akehurst.

Similarly, in 1993 he acquired Urgent Request, who landed a huge gamble when

winning a valuable handicap at Epsom on his stable debut — before adding a group three race at Haydock.

Akehurst's talents were not confined to the Flat. Victory in the Imperial Cup, Swinton Hurdle and Welsh National made him a successful dual-purpose handler. However, three years after he reached retirement age, the time has arrived to step down and let his son, John, take over.

"I have been thinking about it for some time," he said. "I had lunch with one of my

owners at Newbury the other day and when I mentioned it to him he said 'take a tip, don't leave it too long'."

"My son will come into the yard and take over. He trained here when he started and sent out about 20 winners, so he knows the place and Epsom Downs. I have spoken to most of the owners and the majority are going to keep their horses here. It could be a great opportunity for him, but I will still be here as an unpaid assistant."

Unfortunately, the opening up of the Melbourne Cup to horses from the northern hemisphere came too late in Akehurst's career for him to consider a crack at Australia's most famous race, a two-mile handicap run this year on November 4 at Flemington.

However, the desire to emulate the victory of the Dermot

Weld-trained Vintage Crop four years ago remains as strong as ever and two British horses, Arabian Story and Harbour Dues, arrived in Melbourne yesterday after a 26-hour flight.

"They have settled into the quarantine complex at Sandown racecourse [on the outskirts of Melbourne] and look fantastic," Les Benton, of the Victoria Racing Club, said. "I have spoken to the owners of both horses and they said the journey was no problem at all."

Arabian Story, owned by the Queen and trained by Lord Huntingdon, beat the Lady Herries-trained Harbour Dues in a handicap at Epsom in June but the placings were reversed at Klampenborg in August when the pair met in the Scandinavian Open Championship.

THUNDERER

2.00 Top Jam	3.30 Act Defiant
2.00 Adjutant	4.00 Adjuvant
2.30 Rainwalk	4.30 Shadivari
3.00 First Mile	5.00 Quic Minder

Timekeeper's top rating: 4.30 SHADIARI. Our Newmarket Correspondent: 2.30 Polaris.

3.00 CHESTNUT CONDITIONS STAKES

(2-Y-O: 5.4.20. 1m 30yds) (4 runners)

401 (6)	41 (6)	42 (6)	43 (6)
401 (6)	41 (6)	42 (6)	43 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

2.00 HORNBLEND FILLS HANDICAP

(3-Y-O: 5.3.48. 1m 2f 120yds) (13 runners)

101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)
101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

2.30 NEWTON INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT CONDITIONS STAKES

(4.7.51. 1m 3f 200yds) (7 runners)

201 (6)	202 (6)	203 (6)	204 (6)
201 (6)	202 (6)	203 (6)	204 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

3.00 MAPLE HANDICAP

(2.1.57. 6f) (24 runners)

301 (6)	302 (6)	303 (6)	304 (6)
301 (6)	302 (6)	303 (6)	304 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

5.00 SYCAMORE NURSERY HANDICAP

(2-Y-O: 5.3.50. 5f) (12 runners)

501 (6)	502 (6)	503 (6)	504 (6)
501 (6)	502 (6)	503 (6)	504 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

THUNDERER

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2.00 Adjutant	4.00 Adjuvant
2.30 Rainwalk	4.30 Shadivari
3.00 First Mile	5.00 Quic Minder

Timekeeper's top rating: 4.30 SHADIARI. Our Newmarket Correspondent: 2.30 Polaris.

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(2-Y-O: 5.4.20. 1m 30yds) (4 runners)

401 (6)	41 (6)	42 (6)	43 (6)
401 (6)	41 (6)	42 (6)	43 (6)

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(3-Y-O: 5.3.48. 1m 2f 120yds) (13 runners)

101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)
101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

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(4.7.51. 1m 3f 200yds) (7 runners)

201 (6)	202 (6)	203 (6)	204 (6)
201 (6)	202 (6)	203 (6)	204 (6)

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501 (6)	502 (6)	503 (6)	504 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)
101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)

3.00 CHESTNUT CONDITIONS STAKES

(2-Y-O: 5.4.20. 1m 30yds) (4 runners)

401 (6)	41 (6)	42 (6)	43 (6)
401 (6)	41 (6)	42 (6)	43 (6)

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101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)

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(4.7.51. 1m 3f 200yds) (7 runners)

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201 (6)	202 (6)	203 (6)	204 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

3.00 MAPLE HANDICAP

(2.1.57. 6f) (24 runners)

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301 (6)	302 (6)	303 (6)	304 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

5.00 SYCAMORE NURSERY HANDICAP

(2-Y-O: 5.3.50. 5f) (12 runners)

501 (6)	502 (6)	503 (6)	504 (6)
501 (6)	502 (6)	503 (6)	504 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

NOTTINGHAM

101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)
101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)

3.00 CHESTNUT CONDITIONS STAKES

(2-Y-O: 5.4.20. 1m 30yds) (4 runners)

401 (6)	41 (6)	42 (6)	43 (6)
401 (6)	41 (6)	42 (6)	43 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

2.00 HORNBLEND FILLS HANDICAP

(3-Y-O: 5.3.48. 1m 2f 120yds) (13 runners)

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501 (6)	502 (6)	503 (6)	504 (6)
501 (6)	502 (6)	503 (6)	504 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

4.10 RAINWORTH CLAIMING STAKES

(2.2.27. 1m 15yds) (18 runners)

101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)
101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

4.40 CALVERTON MAIDEN STAKES

(2.2.27. 1m 15yds) (18 runners)

101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)
101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

5.10 WOODBROOK HANDICAP

(2.2.27. 1m 15yds) (18 runners)

101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)
101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

5.40 HORSESHOE BETTING LEVY BOARD MAIDEN STAKES

(2.2.27. 1m 15yds) (18 runners)

101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)
101 (6)	102 (6)	103 (6)	104 (6)

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

THUNDERER: 4.00 Act Defiant, 4.30 Shadivari, 5.00 Quic Minder.







## FOOTBALL

# Clarke sent from Coventry to fulfil foreign role

The influx of foreign players into England shows no sign of abating. As clubs increasingly turn abroad to bolster their ranks, Coventry City have taken the next logical step by appointing a full-time European scout.

For Ray Clarke, the job is a labour of love. For a club that can ill afford exorbitant transfer fees, particularly after announcing a record loss of £10 million last week, it is likely to prove a shrewd investment.

"I think, because of the openness of the European Community, the drive towards foreign players is irreversible," Clarke said. "My job is to find the best ones before they become well known and the values at other places leave their branches. If I can find one or two players a year, I have earned my money."

Clarke is based on the outskirts of Amsterdam. Having lost his job as reserve-team coach at Southampton, he was approached by Bryan Richardson, the Coventry chairman, during the summer.

Richard Hobson on an innovative scouting appointment that other clubs may well copy

Gordon Strachan was in the process of restructuring the scouting network and felt that Clarke's knowledge and contacts abroad could be utilised. A prolific striker in the lower divisions in England, Clarke joined Sparta Rotterdam from Mansfield Town in 1976 on the recommendation of Bill McGarry, then the manager of Wolverhampton Wanderers.

Clarke subsequently joined Ajax and played in Johan Cruyff's testimonial match against Bayern Munich in 1978. He helped them to the league and cup double the next year and, after a brief spell with FC Bruges, returned to England in 1980 to play for Brighton. A hip injury finished his career while at

Newcastle United. His passion for the game was stoked by those four, eye-opening years on the Continent. "Holland had been in one World Cup final when I arrived and two years later they were in another. Considering the size of the country, it was remarkable and their training methods were a real education."

"Cruyff was a genius, of course, but there were other players like Rudi Krol, who had great technique but was also an incredibly strong leader of men. They were all so flexible. It seemed obvious why England were miles behind at the time," he said.

"The workload is enormous. Clarke is now in the middle of a seven-match tour that began with the Holland Under-21 international last Friday and includes games in France and Germany, before it finishes in Belgium on Saturday."

"The job can be a bit insular at times," Clarke said. "Last week I made a 1,000-mile round trip to Rennes, not realising quite how far away it was, but I saw a young lad of 19 who is worth keeping tabs on."

"I had never worked with Gordon before, so my biggest worry when I took on the job was that we would look for different things in players. I was very nervous when I made my first recommendation, because I was worried he would come a long way and wonder what I had seen in the lad. Fortunately, he agreed with me and put in a bid the next day."

He believes that more English sides will follow Coventry's example. "The club is being very progressive here," he said. "It is a big market place these days and, with expensive fees being asked, even for players in the Nationwide League, clubs are bound to look to Europe."

"Managers cannot watch games all the time, though, and videotapes are not always reliable. They do not tell you anything about the human being in the shirt. Somebody can be a good player, but if he is going to be unhappy in England, then he will not be worth taking on."

## Edwards' support for terracing condemned

The Football Trust yesterday strongly opposed moves to bring back terracing to the leading grounds in England and Scotland, after Martin Edwards, the Manchester United chief executive, said that there might be a case for what he described as "safe standing".

Richard Faulkner, the Football Trust deputy chairman, said: "We would consider such a move a retrograde step by clubs in the top divisions. There has been a great transformation in stadiums since the Taylor report and a great deal of money spent."

"Facilities have been considerably improved, not just in the seating areas, but throughout the grounds generally. But really it is not a decision for us to take. It is essentially a decision for Government."

The Football Association and its Scottish counterpart

have also voiced their disapproval of Edwards's plan. "I think we would be taking a step back in time," the SFA president, Jack McGinn, said. Faulkner and McGinn were at Hampden Park yesterday morning for the official launch of the Football Trust's partnership with the Scottish Sports Council.

The alliance will have an important role to play in completing the recommendations of the Taylor report. They will also consider awards from the Lottery Sports Fund and the Football Trust finances for work at the grounds of Scottish league clubs.

Faulkner said: "Today's announcement is a tremendous boost for Scottish football and a further vote of confidence in the Trust as the only national body with the remit to help the game at all levels and in all parts of the UK."



Goodway is left with much to ponder after naming his squad for the series with Australia

## Britain pick flexible friends

By Christopher Irvine

IN BASING his selection on experience and form it was the latter that Andy Goodway, the Great Britain coach, had in mind when naming Martin Offiah, which leaves only one specialist wing in the squad for the British Gas series against Australia next month.

That Offiah has lost a yard in pace is not in question. Who will accompany Anthony Sullivan on the wing is. As there is no word yet from the Australian Rugby League (ARL) about releasing Jason Robinson, Alan Hunt is the obvious candidate to revert from centre to his former position, which he filled on the New Zealand tour last year.

Wing is not the only area where players are likely to find themselves in unaccustomed roles. Flexibility is a necessary element of the 22-strong squad announced yesterday, which

is dictated by injuries, the ARL's continued block on Robinson and Gary Connolly's participation, and Goodway's admission about the shallow depth of world-class talent available to him.

It is a shortage of cover at half back and prop that could necessitate Andy Farrell, the captain, reverting from loose forward to stand-off half and Chris Joynt moving up to the front row.

The cut-off point for whether Robinson and Connolly can play in the first international, at Wembley on November 1, is next week. "We've a certain idea how we want to play, which is reflected by the selections, and we are going to push and move people around," Goodway said.

Goodway is prepared to

gamble, simply because he must and because conservative tactics have got Britain nowhere against Australia in the past. The paucity of choice is reflected by a predictable squad in which Sean Long, one of a seven-strong St Helens contingent, is the one name from outside the original training squad, as cover for both half back positions and hooker.

GREAT BRITAIN SQUAD: Backs: P. Atherton (Gloucester), M. Compton (Cardiff), P. Goulding (St Helens), I. Hunt (Leeds), A. Hunt (St Helens), S. Long (St Helens), P. Neill (St Helens), K. Redfern (Wigan), A. Sullivan (St Helens), S. Spruce (Bradford), P. Broadbent (Sheffield), M. Cusack (Wigan), K. Cunningham (St Helens), A. Farrell (capt., Wigan), M. Forshaw (Bradford), S. Headley (Wigan), S. Jones (St Helens), J. Lowe (Bradford), S. McNamee (Bradford), A. Morley (Leeds), D. Sampson (Cardiff), P. Southouse (Warrington). International dates: November 1 (Wembley), November 8 (Old Trafford), November 16 (Blundell Park).

## SPORT IN BRIEF

## McRae steps up rally challenge

COLIN McRAE was 6sec behind his Subaru team-mate, Piero Liati, the leader, in the San Remo rally yesterday, after achieving the fastest time in all of the first four special stages. The Scot jumped from eighth place into second behind Liati, of Italy. After a troubled first day, during which his car suffered suspension problems, McRae said: "At least I can feel that the car's OK."

McRae's improvement was helped by problems suffered by the Toyota of Freddy Loix, of Belgium, and Didier Auriol, of France. Loix had transmission problems while Auriol was penalised 30sec for staying in the pits too long. The pair were in sixth and seventh positions respectively. Tommi Makinen, of Finland, who leads the world championship by eight points, was in third place, with Carlos Saldaña, of Spain, his closest rival for the world title, just 3sec further back.

## England call up Luckes

Hockey: England travel to Cairo for an international tournament from November 1 to 9 as part of the preparation for the World Cup in Utrecht, Holland, next year (Sydney Friskin writes). The team will be joined in Egypt by Barry Dancer, their new Australian coach. There are two changes in the side, Luckes replacing Lewis in goal and Sharpe, one of five Canoe players in the squad, taking over from Fordham in midfield.

ENGLAND SQUAD: S. Henson (Reading), D. Luckes (East Grinstead), J. Wyatt (Reading), J. Hall (Hull), W. Waugh (Sunderland), A. Humphrey (Cardiff), J. Pollock (Cardiff), B. Sharpe (Cardiff), R. Crutcher (Cardiff), N. Thompson (Cardiff), C. Meyer (Cardiff), B. Barnes (East Grinstead), R. Garcia (Hull), D. Woods (Sunderland), D. Hall (Gloucester), C. Giles (New Zealand), D. Hall (Hull).

## Lewis may forsake title

Athletics: Denise Lewis, the British heptathlete, may sacrifice her Commonwealth Games title to be better prepared for the European championships, which are only three weeks later, next year. Lewis, who won a silver medal at the world championships this year, is keen to gain revenge on Sabine Braun, of Germany, who won the gold. Lewis may compete instead in the long jump at the Commonwealth Games.

## Redskins move up

American football: Washington Redskins moved into first place in the National Football Conference Eastern division with a 21-16 victory over Dallas Cowboys on Monday night. Stephen Davis replaced the injured Terry Allen and scored two touchdowns in the Redskins' win. □ Ashton Gate, the home of Bristol City, will stage one of the England Monarchs' five home games next year.

## Lytham gets upgrade

Golf: The Royal and Ancient have agreed to make improvements at Royal Lytham and St Annes, the course that has been chosen to host the Open Championship for the second time in five years. The 2001 Open will be played over the links course after negotiations between the club and the Royal and Ancient over new drainage and irrigation systems, and the installation of improved service roads.

## Marathon chance

Athletics: Only 11 days are left to enter the 1998 Flora London Marathon. Completed forms must be with the organisers by Saturday, October 25. The official entry form is in the free magazine, *Marathon News*, which is obtainable from 1,000 selected sports shops in the United Kingdom. To find your nearest shop, phone the Asics Flora London Marathon hotline on 01925 417744.

## SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This is a hand from the London Easter Festival Teams. At first glance, West seems to have followed up a promising lead with a poor switch at trick two. On closer inspection, I think you can see that East was at fault.

Dealer North	East-West vulnerable	IMP's
♠ Q 8 7 2 ♥ 8 5 ♦ 8 4 ♣ A Q 8 6 2	♠ 4 5 ♥ Q J 10 8 7 2 ♦ K 10 5 ♣ J 10 7	
♠ K 3 ♥ A 8 6 5 ♦ Q J 10 8 2 ♣ K 5 4	♠ A J 10 9 8 4 ♥ K 4 ♦ A 7 3 ♣ 9 3	

W	N	E	S
Townsend	Clark	Allerton	Su Burn
3H	2H (1)	4S	2S

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: queen of diamonds

(1) Two Hearts was a Weak Two. West held trick one with the queen of diamonds. He then followed with the ace of hearts, greeted with a rather sarcastic queen (well, that was West's description to me of how East played it). The queen denied the king — remember, when you signal with an honour, always play the top of a sequence. Declarer's only subsequent loser was in trumps, so Four Spades made.

In the post-mortem West observed that declarer could always make Four Spades, against any defence at trick two, by establishing dummy's clubs. What is more, East had missed a chance to beat the contract. East might have asked himself why West had declined to lead the partnership suit, hearts; he should have concluded that it was

because West had the unsupported ace, definitely a no-no lead.

In that case it was imperative for East to gain the lead. The way to do that was by overruling the queen of diamonds with the king. If declarer ducks, East switches to the queen of hearts. If she takes the ace of diamonds, West can underlead to East's ten of diamonds to get the heart return after he wins the king of spades.

□ *The Times Book of Bridge* 1, a compendium of some of Robert Sheehan's daily columns, is now available in all good bookshops or direct from the publisher, B. T. Batsford, on 01753 321276, price £6.99 (plus £1 postage and packing). □ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

By Philip Howard

HOOSIER  
a. More pious  
b. A merchant venturer  
c. From Indiana

KLETTERSCHUH  
a. A boot  
b. An Arts movement  
c. An organ stop

MARRI  
a. The red gum  
b. Initiation through fire  
c. A sand cel

Answers on page 50

## KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

### Tilburg

Having maintained the lead from the start, Garry Kasparov, the world champion, faltered in the closing rounds and allowed his two closest rivals to catch up with him at the Tilburg tournament in Holland. In the final round, Kasparov could only draw against Lautner while Kramnik defeated Van Wely and Swidler beat Onischuk. The final outcome was a triple tie for first prize.

A win by one of the trio of first prize winners.

White: Vladimir Kramnik  
Black: Loek Van Wely  
Tilburg, October 1997

Queen's Indian Defence

1 Nf3	Nf6
2 c4	b6
3 d4	Bb7
4 Bg2	a6
5 O-O	Be7
6 d4	O-O
7 Re1	c5
8 cxd5	exd5
9 Nd3	Nbd7
10 Bf4	Ne4
11 Qc2	c5
12 dxc5	Bxc5
13 Nxe4	dxc4
14 Ng5	Nf5

Diagram of final position

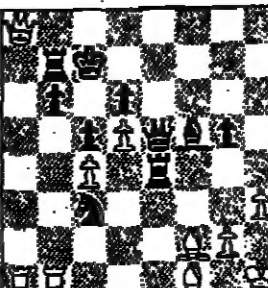
Tilburg final cross-table	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Pts
1 Swidler	—	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	8
2 Kasparov	0	—	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	8
3 Kramnik	1/2	1/2	—	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	7
4 Adams	1/2	1/2	1/2	—	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	7
5 Leko	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	—	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	6
6 Polgar	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	—	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	5
7 Shirov	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	4
8 Lautner	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	—	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	4
9 Van Wely	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	—	1/2	1/2	1/2	4
10 Onischuk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	1/2	1/2	2
11 Pliet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1/2	—	1/2	2
12 Shalov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1/2	1/2	—	1

In the above table, 1 represents a win, 1/2 a draw and 0 a loss.

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Milov — Huss, German League 1997. After a long struggle, Black has centralised his forces while White has made inroads on the queen-side. However, White's progress proved the more relevant. Can you see why?

Solution on page 50



10p

THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES







# Strictly personal view of the Great Storm

As I was on the Isle of Man on the night of October 16, 1987, the Great Storm rather passed me by. I remember it because I was there on a press trip looking at off-shore something-or-other with a small party of journalists that included Rebecca Stephens. She would go on to become the first British woman to climb Everest and I would go on to watch a huge amount of television. Funny thing, destiny.

Anyway, the first sign I had that elsewhere the weather had gone seriously amiss came when I switched on the hotel television (even in those days a remote was never far from hand) and discovered breakfast television, apparently broadcasting by candlelight. Later that day, taxi-ride from Heathrow to Docklands (pre-storm market crash you could claim those sort of expenses) provided an unforgettable Peppys progress through battered London.

Last night The Great Storm: a 999 Special (BBC1) provided a rather different reminder, in a programme which, by concentrating on the human dramas of the night and virtually ignoring the sheer physical damage, gave a slightly incomplete picture of what happened. By concentrating on the human dramas that had a relatively happy ending, it also gave us a typically 999 picture of history.

Nineteen people died and 15 million trees blew down in a matter of hours, but they would have to wait for another sort of documentary — 999 is about optimism and overcoming impossible odds. As ever, it proved an effective mix despite the problems of reducing 14 million personal memories down to a handful of skilful reconstructions.

We had the man whose caravan converted to flat-pack assembly while he and his wife were inside it; we had the inevitable birthing

and the baby girl inevitably christened Gayle, and we had the Jersey woman thrown over a balcony by wind that she described as not so much a gust as a presence. With the new ritual humiliation of Michael Fish tossed in for free, it was good television but television that perhaps hadn't provided the comprehensive account that the tenth anniversary required. Mind you, I wasn't there.



Matthew Bond

To my surprise, Network First: Living with Grace (ITV) turned out to be even better television. On paper, it looked like cheap opportunism, the death of one charismatic Princess offering the chance to linger over the strikingly similar death of another, Princess Grace of Monaco. But, within a few seconds of Zoe Wamaker's narration getting under way, it was clear we were watching a programme that had been months in the making,

extraordinary story would be told — in the main — by those who witnessed it, it was a price worth paying. A sister, two bridesmaids, a lover, a walker — this was a top-notch documentary cast.

The picture of Kelly that emerged was inevitably affectionate and sentimental (I wondered how many times the wedding had been described as "a co-proposition between MGM and God") but it also seemed to be reasonably honest, fairly human and wonderfully interesting. No doubt there are those of you who knew all about the disagreement between Aristotle Onassis and Princess Rainier as to how the fortunes of the principality might best be revived, but it was news to me. As indeed was the fact that if things had gone just a little differently, it could easily have been Princess Marilyn of Monaco.

As the programme headed towards its unhappy conclusion, there were the echoes of more recent events, in particular in a letter Prince Rainier wrote to his public relations man complaining about the curse of mini tape-recorders and giant telephones. "I don't hate, I despise," he concluded, "I look forward to next week's second instalment, although with the star now gone, it may have trouble sustaining the level of interest that last night's managed so impressively."

Home-grown drama remains something of a rarity on Sky 1, making the launch of just about anything an occasion of note. The thing to note about Dream Team, however, is that it's actually quite good. It's also perhaps the first television series about football that has been written not for people who like drama but people who like football. To that end it has some of the most convincing footballing scenes

I've seen on television, helped by computer effects that can turn the blue shirts of Leicester City into the purple of Harchester United and by a young cast chosen for their footballing skills rather than their acting talents.

The quick among you will have realised that there is a downside to this last point, but on the evidence of this opening episode, not a serious one. The acting in the not wholly dissimilar *Hollyhocks*, the Channel 4 teen soap, was no great shakes when it started and yet it now has a strong following among its youthful target audience. Dream Team could easily emulate that success.

As for securing the services of the real-life Ron Atkinson as manager of Harchester, it was a masterstroke. Mind you, after last night's 2-1 defeat by Chelsea, how long will he last? I think he can expect to receive the full backing of the chairman at any moment.

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (42603)
  - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (1) (82649115)
  - 9.00am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (3724392)
  - 9.30am Sky Challenge (4976508)
  - 9.55am Killy (1) (8655495)
  - 10.35am Change That (8261195)
  - 11.00am News (1) and weather (7683852)
  - 11.05am The Really Useful Show (1) (7678318)
  - 11.35am Room for Improvement: The Home of Designer John Rocha (1) (8886888)
  - 12.00pm News (1) and weather (8011841)
  - 12.05pm Call My Bluff (7713181)
  - 12.35am Going for a Song (5473976)
  - 1.00pm News (1) and weather (17080)
  - 1.30am Regional News (1) (73515467)
  - 1.40am The Weather Show (82284450)
  - 1.45am Neighbours (1) (7123197)
  - 2.10am Quincey (1) (8253825)
  - 3.00am Through the Keyhole (1) (1405202)
  - 3.25am The Really Useful Show (4882318)
  - 3.30am Playdays (1) (827405) 4.10am Get Your Own Back (1) (8134405) 4.30am Out of Tune (1) (8772307) 5.00am Newswatch (1) (2053009) 5.10am Blue Peter (1) (842194)
  - 5.35am Neighbours (1) (1) (468008)
  - 6.00am News (1) and weather (844)
  - 6.30am Regional News (1) (195)
  - 7.00am The X Factor: Animal People The work of Uganda's recently installed 20-year-old chief wildlife warden, Gladys Kalema (1) (8028)
  - 7.30am Tomorrow's World: Tomorrow's Babies A special report on the future of human reproduction (1) (880)
  - 8.00am Crimebeat Marilyn Lewis investigates how crime rates in Teesside and Northumbria have been dramatically cut (1) (8778)
  - 8.30am The National Lottery Live The actress Kate Beckinsale presses the all-important button. Music is provided by Passion Star (1) (858467)
  - 8.45am Points of View (1) (121825)
  - 8.55am Party Political Broadcast by the Conservative Party (1) (352134)
  - 9.00am Nine O'Clock News (1) and regional news and weather (3823)
  - 9.25am National Lottery Update (309202)
  - 9.30am The X Factor: Singsong A cosmetic surgeon's claim to have been possessed during a hideously unsuccessful operation leaves Scott typically unconvinced (1) (80912)
  - 10.15am Chalk: Eric lands himself on the wrong side of the school's only bright spark (1) (124080)
  - 10.45am Blindside (1993) with Jeff Fahey, Mia Sara, Jack Keeler and Brad Hunt. Steamy thriller about a cop, blinded by a roadside truck during a drug raid. Directed by Tom Donnelly (478347) WALES: 10.45am Touch of Classics (1937) 11.15am FILM: Blindside (1993) 12.15am FILM: Moving Target (1988) (121871) 1.45am Weather (1783871)
  - 1.45am Weather (1783871)

- BBC2**
- 6.00am Technology: Seeing Through Mathematics (1) (83844) 6.30am The Front Desk (1) (8221)
  - 7.00am See Hear: Breakfast News (1) and signing (9558778)
  - 7.15am Teletubbies (1) (8661195) 7.40am Smurfs: Adventures (1) (823883) 8.05am The Really Useful Show (1) (7350385) 8.30am Playdays (1) (827405) 8.40am Tales of Arwen (1) (2534595) 8.45am Harry and the Hendersons (1) (8550283)
  - 9.10am What? Where? When? Why? (3471318) 9.25am English Express (700487) 9.45am Words and Pictures (856784) 10.00am Teletubbies (12353) 10.30am Numberline (8810727) 10.45am Cat's Eyes (823812) 11.00am Around Scotland (821008) 11.20am Geography Programme (828283) 11.40am Revista (201318) 11.55am Quincey Minutes Plus (7489414) 12.10am Isabel Little (579028) 12.30am Working Lunch (15047)
  - 1.00am Noddy (3298585) 1.10am The Countrywide Hour: An underwater view in the Lake District (757467)
  - 2.10am Today's Sports: Buys Open The first of today's best-of-five sports and matches from the Guild Hall in Preston (3825918)
  - 5.50am Lifestyle (1) (12863)
  - 6.00am Star Trek: The Next Generation (1) (210554)
  - 6.45am Sliders (1) (1) (442486)
  - 7.30am Conquering Shakespeare Shakespeare's Measure for Measure. Last in series (950)
  - 8.00am University Challenge: Christ Church, Oxford v the Open University (1) (8318)
  - 8.30am The Antiques Show Investments: a country house sale; vintage motorbikes; Muhammad Ali's robe (1) (8525)

- HTV**
- 6.00am GMTV (4979318)
  - 6.25am Supermarket Sweep (1) (3713283)
  - 9.55am Regional News (5842296)
  - 10.00am The Time, the Place (12328)
  - 10.30am This Morning (1) (7758525)
  - 12.20pm Regional News (8017625)
  - 12.30am News (1) and weather (5459778)
  - 12.55am Shortland Street (5444467) 1.35am Home and Away (1) (768454) 1.50am The Carpenters (1) (71207912) 2.20am Vanessa (1) (7442048) 2.50am The Natural Health Show (929134)
  - 3.20am News (1) (4855115)
  - 3.25am Regional News (1) (4857486)
  - 3.30am Total TV (891047) 3.40am The Parkies (494318) 3.50am The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh (1) (1244323) 4.20am Extreme Ghostbusters (1) (8125757) 4.45am It's a Mystery (1) (875953)
  - 5.10am WALSLEY: What's My Love? (3843047)
  - 5.10am No Naked Flames: The Work Experience (3843047)
  - 5.40am News (1) and weather (528825)
  - 6.00am Home and Away (476912)
  - 6.25am Regional Weather (378931)
  - 6.30am Regional News (1) (592)
  - 7.00am Emmerdale Andy is left to fend for himself in a cold cavern (1) (418)
  - 7.30am Coronation Street The Platts are in for a surprise at Don's funeral (1) (778)

- As HTV West except:**
- 12.55am A Country Practice (5444467)
  - 5.10-5.40am Shortland Street (3843047)
  - 6.25-7.00am Central News (767047)
  - 10.45am Central Sports Special (3541264)
  - 12.20pm Hitchhiker's Guide (308210)
  - 12.45am Film: Eye of the Cat (961992)
  - 2.30am In Focus (5568210)
  - 3.15am The Mysterious West (37328252)
  - 3.40am The Good Sex Guide (5072603)
  - 4.35am Central Highway '97 (823822)
  - 5.20am Asian Eye (7084142)
- As HTV West except:**
- 12.20pm Illuminations (8017825)
  - 12.55am Home and Away (3914825)
  - 1.20am Emmerdale (4659308)
  - 5.10-5.40am Home and Away (3843047)
  - 6.00-7.00am Westcountry Live (10592)
  - 10.45am Special Report (158047)
  - 11.15am The Westcountry Match (525931)
  - 12.10am The Making of Event Horizon (4202784)
- As HTV West except:**
- 5.10pm-5.40am Home and Away (3843047)
  - 6.00am Meridian Tonight (912)
  - 6.30-7.00pm Put It to the Test (592)
  - 10.40am The Bodyman (822912)
  - 11.10am Live at Jongleurs (59370)
  - 11.40am Beyond Reason (549776)
  - 12.10am Meridian Musicclass (4202784)
  - 5.00am Freezone (26210)
- As HTV West except:**
- 12.55am A Country Practice (5444467)
  - 5.10-5.40am Shortland Street (3843047)
  - 6.25-7.00am Anglia News (767047)
  - 10.40am Midweek Klok-Off (823198)
  - 12.15am Short Story Cinema (3308897)
- Starts: 7.00am The Big Breakfast (30931)**
- 9.00am Yagellon (127080)
  - 11.30am Here's One I Made Earlier (7028)
  - 12.00pm Sesame Street (56283)
  - 12.30am Ricki Lake (25355)
  - 1.00am Skat Net (3237080)
  - 1.15am The Tox (3230083)
  - 1.30am Film: Hobnob's Choice (17738)
  - 3.30am Collector's Lot (370)
  - 4.00am Fifteen-A-One (405)
  - 4.30am Routes Around the World (569)
  - 5.00am Pump (4395757)
  - 5.15am Film (2058554)
  - 5.30am Countdown (841)
  - 6.10am Heno (225488)
  - 7.00am Pobel y Cwm (597399)
  - 7.25am Film (882486)
  - 8.00am Gweth Carref (1488)
  - 8.30am Newyddion (3221)
  - 9.00am Prime Suspect (5405)
  - 10.00am Brookside (718842)
  - 10.35am Baby's Bay (280195)
  - 11.30am Cyf (80825)
  - 12.00am Fresh Pop (8274081)
  - 12.05am Under the Moon (11767448)
  - 4.30am Board Stupid (51448)
  - 5.00am Screaming Reels (9752264)

- 5.55am Sesame Street (25573)**
- 7.00am The Big Breakfast (30931)**
- 9.00am Schools: Making Sense of Science (85247) 9.30am Good Health (854757) 9.45am Book Box (5852912) 10.00am Stage Two Science (2310825) 10.15am Rat-A-Tat-Tat (2333778) 10.30am The Jacobites (1) (7466196) 10.50am Stop, Look, Listen (1711775) 11.00am First Edition (820383) 11.15am The Milk (8263028)**
- 11.30am Here's One I Made Earlier** Chicken soup; Ian of Iorw with Mediterranean vegetables; boursin cheese (1) (7028)
- 12.00am Sesame Street (56283) 12.30pm Light Lunch (54301) 1.30am Upstairs and Downstairs: Animation (8884496)**
- 1.25am Carmen Jones (1954)** Updated version of Bizet and Merimee's Carmen, set in America with an all-black cast, starring Dorothy Dandridge, Harry Belafonte and Pearl Bailey. Directed by Otto Preminger (1) (4095750)
- 3.30am Collector's Lot (1) (370) 4.00am Fifteen-A-One (1) (405) 4.30am Countdown (1) (8773005) 4.55am Ricki Lake (1) (8627238) 5.30am Pet Rescue (1) (841)**
- 6.00am The Cosby Show** Despite his family's lack of confidence, Cliff puts his DIY skills to the test (1) (554)
- 6.30am Roseanne** Roseanne's parents arrive unexpectedly (1) (134)
- 7.00am Channel 4 News (1)** Includes headlines and weather at 7.20 (221080)
- 7.50am Beyond the Bookers** Jonathan King offers his opinions on the literary prize (1) (296318)
- 8.00am Brookside** Rachel leisters on the edge. Will Lindsay and Peter make the most of their time alone together? (1) (1488)
- 8.30am Out of Africa: Lushlife** Lushlife and Lushlife's Two of the rarest species of little meadow to survive at Kosi Bay in Natal, South Africa, away from the interference of man (1) (3221)

## CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE

Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder N 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder N 63 are: picture: 10.2075 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz

- 6.00am 5 News Early (287283)**
- 7.30am Millhouse (780000) 7.35am USA High (1) (790842) 8.00am Heavens (1) (826979)**
- 8.30am Worldwide Documentary** series on the development of cities (11/12) (826905)
- 9.00am Espresso Consumer magazine (5453931) 10.00am Exclusive (1) (8109554) 10.30am Newsday's Day With It (1) (727488)**
- 11.00am Lesta Chat show (5016329) 11.50am Double Espresso (4418202) 12.00am The Bold and the Beautiful (1) (826738) 12.30pm Family Affairs (1) (810568)**
- 1.00am 5 News Update (9051863) 1.05am Sunset Beach (1) (1218115) 2.00am 5's Company. Live entertainment show (459221)**
- 3.30am The Picasso Summer (1972)** starring Albert Finney and Yvette Mimieux. A young couple's love of the works of Picasso sends them on a pilgrimage to meet the great man. Directed by Serge Bourguignon (382808)
- 5.20am 5's Company - Late Extra (5588168) 5.30am Whistle Audience participation quiz (1) (2264202)**
- 6.00am 100 Per Cent** Hostless game show (8261115)
- 6.30am Family Affairs** Chris has second thoughts (825467)
- 7.00am Exultance** Man from the world of cartoons that appeal to adults (8019757)
- 7.30am Beauty Britain Uninvited** Guests How houses play host to a variety of unwanted guests (1) (8261979)
- 8.00am Instant Gardens** William Van Hage and the team breathe new life into a neglected Hemmings market garden (826340)
- 8.30am 5 News (1) (8007912)**

## For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see Vision, published on Saturday

## SKY 1

- 6.00am Morning Glory (54181) 6.00am News and weather (1) (82649115) 6.30am News (1) (82649115) 6.55am News (1) (82649115) 7.00am News (1) (82649115) 7.15am News (1) (82649115) 7.30am News (1) (82649115) 7.45am News (1) (82649115) 7.55am News (1) (82649115) 8.00am News (1) (82649115) 8.15am News (1) (82649115) 8.30am News (1) (82649115) 8.45am News (1) (82649115) 8.55am News (1) (82649115) 9.00am News (1) (82649115) 9.15am News (1) (82649115) 9.30am News (1) (82649115) 9.45am News (1) (82649115) 10.00am News (1) (82649115) 10.15am News (1) (82649115) 10.30am News (1) (82649115) 10.45am News (1) (82649115) 10.55am News (1) (82649115) 11.00am News (1) (82649115) 11.15am News (1) (82649115) 11.30am News (1) (82649115) 11.45am News (1) (82649115) 11.55am News (1) (82649115) 12.00am News (1) (82649115) 12.15am News (1) (82649115) 12.30am News (1) (82649115) 12.45am News (1) (82649115) 1.00am News (1) (82649115) 1.15am News (1) (82649115) 1.30am News (1) (82649115) 1.45am News (1) 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BOWLS 46

Shaken Thomson meets his match in Johnston

SNOOKER 50

Burden lifted by big break in Bournemouth



Bid for 2003 world championships put on hold after BAF goes into administration

# Financial crisis casts cloud over British athletics

By DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

IN A move which has "devastated" David Moorcroft, the governing body's chief executive, the British Athletic Federation (BAF) went into administration yesterday, leaving the future of the sport in Britain clouded in uncertainty. Facing a deficit of £530,000 and monthly running costs of £130,000, the federation now has an anxious wait over its very existence.

While about 40 federation employees are under threat of redundancy, other areas of British athletics now shrouded in doubt are coaching and the development of emerging talent, the staging of international championships in Britain, and even the promotion of national championships. However, the so-called World Class Performance Plan, funded by the National Lottery, is not affected and the top 200 or so British athletes will continue to receive subsistence, training and medical support. That said, those who appeared in Britain's televised meetings this year have yet to be paid and are among the creditors facing losses. Among the coaches under the axe are Bruce Longden, who guided Sally Gunnell and Daley Thompson to Olympic gold medals, and Carl Johnson, who steered Jonathan Edwards to a world title and world records.

Moorcroft, appointed in July but who took up his position only two weeks ago, called an emergency news conference at the BAF headquarters in Birmingham, where he admitted: "I was in a position now to be deciding whether I wish to be chief executive of the BAF. I clearly would not. I am devastated at what has happened."

Moorcroft added, however, that he did not think he had been misled and that he would

continue in an attempt to resolve the difficulties inherited from Peter Radford, who resigned in January. "The federation has a £530,000 deficit which has to be paid immediately," Moorcroft added. "This is a dire situation for the federation but not for the athletes. For 99 per cent of people in athletics, business will carry on as normal."

The main cause of the BAF's financial position was, according to Moorcroft, a dramatic downturn in income from television and sponsorship.



Moorcroft: "devastated"

Television money fell from £1.5 million in 1996 to less than £1 million this year and sponsorship income by 45 per cent. Escalating legal costs have also played a significant part.

The BAF management board met on Friday and, after taking legal advice, was told that it was insolvent and that it should apply for an administration order. Moore Stephens Booth, White, the Birmingham-based insolvency practitioner, was called in on Monday and the court appointed three partners. One of them, Ron Speight, said that he expected the process of determining the BAF's future to take "weeks rather than months".

Among the potential creditors is Diane Modahl, who is suing the federation for £500,000 over drugs allegations. "As it stands, the potential Modahl claim is a contingent liability," Speight said. "If it is proven, she would rank as a creditor in proportion to all the other creditors." He noted that several football clubs had fought their way out of administration.

Moorcroft added: "The way the sport is structured means that it will carry on. But the federation, and the associated activities of the federation, are under threat. The governing body may not exist in its current form."

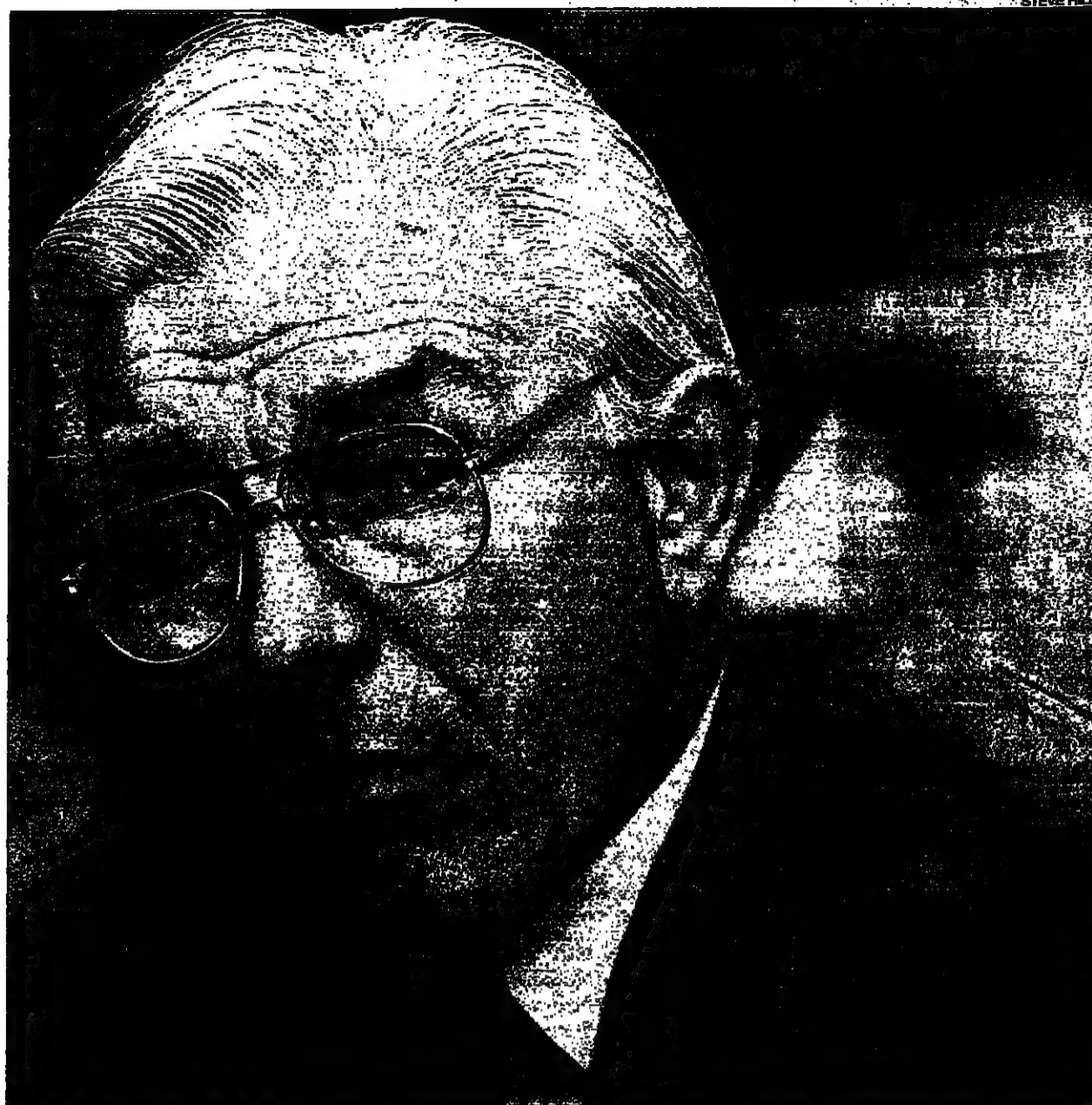
However, the "ring-fencing" of National Lottery money, administered by the Sports Council, ensures that the participation of British athletes in international competition is protected. "The money from the Sports Council has gone into a separate company," Moorcroft said.

Ironically, one of the BAF's constituent bodies, the AAA of England, has reserves of more than £1 million. Although it has committed £90,000 in support to the BAF, so far that is as far as it has gone. After a fractious relationship with the BAF, only under Moorcroft has the position begun to improve.

Moorcroft said that BAF business would now be run by the administrators. He added that the bid to stage the 2003 world championships, which would be the first big global event at the new national stadium at Wembley, would go on hold.

The next world championships to be staged by the BAF are in cross country in 1999 and they are now in doubt. "The world cross country championships will, I think, continue, but I am not certain," Moorcroft added.

The federation's biggest asset is its headquarters, bought during the recession for £450,000. Moorcroft said that selling the building was "a consideration".



Ken Rickhuss, the BAF chairman, listens as details of the federation's plight are given to a press conference

## COUNTDOWN TO BANKRUPTCY

March 1991: The British Athletic Federation (BAF), a body embracing every part of the sport and first conceived in 1988, is finally set up. Half of the £2.5 million reserves of the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA), the English governing body, are transferred to BAF.

Oct 1991: The new governing body begins operating.

Nov 1991: Malcolm Jones, former senior executive with Vauxhall Motors and Westland Helicopters, is appointed chief executive of the BAF.

Feb 1993: The BAF Council nominates Professor Peter Radford, the vice-chairman, David Bedford, the secretary, and John Lister, the treasurer, who played a decisive role in saving the sport from near-bankruptcy seven years earlier. All are criticised for their part in a clandestine movement to oust Jones. He leaves employment of the BAF later that year.

Jan 1994: Suicide of Cliff Temple, athletics correspondent of The Sunday Times. BAF subsequently begins disciplinary proceedings against Andy Norman, its promotions director. Norman is accused of making threats and spreading false rumours against Temple (which he denied). In July 1993, Norman allegedly warned Temple that if he went ahead with an investigative article, rumours might be spread that Temple had sexually harassed athletes that he coached. Tony Ward, the BAF spokesman, says of Temple's suicide that it "had plunged British athletics into the abyss".

Feb 1994: Radford takes up post as BAF executive chairman. Cash crisis at BAF, with Lister wanting the coaching budget cut by £400,000.

Mar 1994: Bedford and Bob Greenock, the vice-chairman, are voted out at a tempestuous AGM. Frank Dick, head of

coaching, resigns in protest at the lack of funds.

Apr 1994: Norman is sacked as promotions director and is given an estimated £100,000 settlement.

Aug 1994: The Diane Modahl affair begins, bringing the sport a barrage of bad publicity in a year in which four other British athletes are found positive for doping. She comes back from the Commonwealth Games after allegedly failing a drug test.

Sep 1994: Steve Cram and David Moorcroft quit the BAF disciplinary working group, frustrated by lack of progress.

Dec 1994: Modahl is banned from athletics for four years after being found guilty by a BAF disciplinary committee of taking an illicit substance.

July 1995: Modahl's appeal is upheld by a BAF three-man

tribunal. Radford has a public row with Lintford Christie and Colin Jackson over appearance money in British meetings.

Feb 1996: Modahl issues a writ against the BAF, claiming compensation of £500,000.

Mar 1996: Lister, who resigns as treasurer, warns the AGM of the BAF that the sport was "paying the price of complacency of self-interest".

Dec 1996: Ward leaves BAF, saying that he "has been 'dumped' and warning that British athletics 'was on the way to tearing itself apart'".

Jan 1997: Radford resigns as executive chairman.

Jul 1997: Moorcroft is named as the new chief executive of the BAF.

John Goodbody

Cup draw, page 46

## McIntosh cleared of disrepute charge

By DAVID HANES, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

DALE MCINTOSH, the Pontypriid No 8, should be free to appear in the Heineken Cup play-off with Brive on November 1. McIntosh, who was suspended for 30 days after being sent off in the first meeting between the clubs last month, was cleared yesterday by European Rugby Cup Ltd (ERC) of bringing the game into disrepute and is free to resume playing this week.

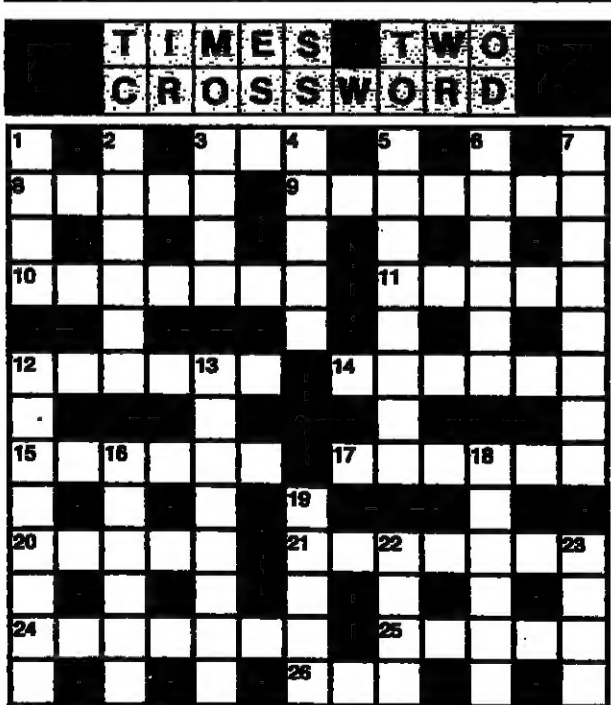
McIntosh, capped twice by Wales, was sent off along with Lionel Mallier, the Brive flanker, after a prolonged fracas during the game on September 14. As he left the pitch, he made repeated thumbs-up gestures to the crowd which were regarded as inflammatory and resulted in the disrepute charge.

He was also alleged, along with Phil John and Andre Barnard, to have been involved in a bar-room brawl later that same evening and it is the upshot of that which will decide whether he can play in Brive next month. An examining magistrate in France is still considering the incident and, until her findings are established, the three Pontypriid players require legal dispensation if they are to visit the Brive area.

"It is good to have my name cleared," McIntosh said after the hearing in Dublin. "I have a habit of giving a thumbs-up sign at just about anything. I didn't mean any disrespect but obviously I'll have to be careful in the future when I do it."

He has been cautioned by ERC about his future conduct but he is free to play against Llanelli in the Welsh League on Saturday, at a time when Pontypriid's other No 8s are doubtful through injury. The Welsh champions are likely to instruct their legal representative today to begin the legal process which would permit McIntosh, John and Barnard to go to Brive.

"We had a fax yesterday from the hotel in Brive where we stayed before, inviting us back," Cerydd Thomas, the chief executive, said. "Someone over there likes us. We hope that the view will be taken that our lads will come to play rugby and no more. It's not a question of visiting Brive in the general sense of the word."



No 1225

### ACROSS

- 3 Plant: ball in whistle (3)
- 8 Invalid (5)
- 9 Childish silly (7)
- 10 One making stitches (7)
- 11 Pass on (to); appeal (to) (5)
- 12 Impose sanction on (6)
- 14 Carve (marble) (6)
- 15 Formalise (set of principles) (6)
- 17 Hatful (6)
- 20 A slip; expire (5)
- 21 Severely plain liver (7)
- 24 Violent attack; sort of course (7)
- 25 Sheriff's band (5)
- 26 Consume (3)

### DOWN

- 1 Level in hierarchy; offensive (4)
- 2 Flag officer (6)
- 3 Piece of land; storyline (4)
- 4 Separated (5)
- 5 In layers; (houses) linked (8)
- 6 French tower builder (6)
- 7 (Organic) debris (8)
- 12 Odd; special (8)
- 13 Make malleable; weaken (one's) resistance (6,2)
- 16 Remove from high office (6)
- 18 Stupid; sort of angle (6)
- 19 Class of (Hindu) society (5)
- 22 Egyptian Christian (4)
- 23 (US) female in mixed college (2-2)

### SOLUTION TO NO 1224

- ACROSS: 4 End '8 Opinion 9 Ounce 10 Sherd 11 Arizona 12 Decrease 14 Fine 15 Cane 16 Alderman 20 Work out 21 Cader 23 Rival 24 Overseer 25 Fen
- DOWN: 1 Doused 2 Eire 3 Fiddle 4 Encapsulation 5 Doric 6 Encomium 7 Regale 13 Contrive 15 Coward 17 Exposed 18 Nether 19 Woolf 22 Dose

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## Pressure builds up for Francis

By MATT DICKINSON

GERRY FRANCIS may not make it to White Hart Lane tonight, but that might not be such a bad thing. The Tottenham Hotspur manager has been laid low by a wrenched back, an injury sustained while playing with his children, and it could spare him another tense evening at the mercy of the club's increasingly fractious supporters.



Robson: talks denied

Defeat against Derby County in the third round of the Coca-Cola Cup would guarantee renewed calls for his dismissal. While Alan Sugar,

three-year contract, has admitted that Tottenham will have to win a trophy this season if he is to survive.

He has not been helped by a succession of serious injuries, the latest depriving him of the England striker, Les Ferdinand, who is expected to be out of action for three months after groin surgery.

Ray Wilkins, the Fulham manager, yesterday paid Arsenal £750,000 for the mid-field player, Ian Selley, who played in the first team under George Graham but has been unable to break into the side since Arsene Wenger took over as manager.

The former Rangers and Scotland captain, Richard Gough, re-signed for the Hox club from the US Major League side, Kansas City Wizz, yesterday and said he hoped to help Rangers extend their record-equalling run of nine Scottish championship successes.

"I don't think there will be the same pressure as last year, when we were trying to equal Celtic's nine. I believe we will play free football this year," Gough, 35, who has signed a two-year contract, said.

Gough spent only four months in the US. "This is a pleasant move for me," he said. "A lot of people thought I would come back one day, but I don't think they believed it would be just four months down the line."

Robson, 65, is missing the involvement with players and is hankering for one last challenge before retirement.

Francis, who has less than 12 months remaining of his

## Shearer prefers safe approach

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

WITH THE World Cup finals now beckoning, Alan Shearer is not about to risk making a premature return to football from the injury that has kept him out all season. If he were to come back too quickly from the broken ankle and torn ligaments that he sustained in a pre-season match and which kept him on crutches until this week, then his chance of playing in France 98 would be all but ended.

Shearer was off crutches for the first time at Newcastle United's training ground yesterday and working out on an exercise bike. It was an encouraging sign, but not of an imminent comeback.

"There will be no miracles," Shearer said. "It will be after Christmas, before I return. When I don't know. It probably won't be January and probably won't be February either." March would seem, therefore, to be the earliest date for Shearer's comeback, which would give him just enough time to get back to his best before the finals get under way in June.

Whether England are to be among the seeded nations in the World Cup remains to be seen, with Sir Bert Millichip, the former Football Association chairman, among those making the decision. Sir Bert sits on the 28-man Fifa organising committee for the World Cup, which has the sole say on the running and rules of France 98.

That committee, which also includes David Will, of Scotland, will finalise the procedure for the event in the next seven weeks and could decide to give greater prominence to the much-derided world

rankings list, which puts England at No 7. If that happens, England could head one of the eight groups, ensuring they avoid playing any of the real big guns in the opening round. Other seeds are likely to include Brazil, the holders, France, the hosts, Germany and Argentina.

If the rules that governed the seedings at the last World Cup, in the United States in 1994, are confirmed, then England, who failed to qualify, would almost certainly not be seeded, but changes may



Shearer: training

be offset. Keith Cooper, the Fifa spokesman, said yesterday: "Previously, seedings have been based on performances in the three most recent World Cups. That has proved its worth and will be a big element, but since then the rankings have been introduced and quite possibly they will be an extra factor that the organising committee wants to take into account. One reason the rankings were not used for USA 94 was that they had only been introduced three months earlier."

# Plan of attack.

start this end

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